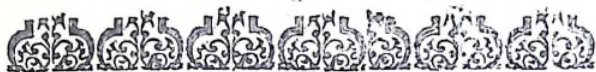


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Coleman, Thomas. *The Christians course and complaint, both in the pursuit of happinesse desired, and for advantages slipped in that pursuit: a sermon preached to the Honorable House of Commons on the monethly fast day, August 30. 1643. at St. Margarets Church in Westminster.* London: I.L., 1643.



*Die Mercurii 30. Augusti. 1643.*

**I**T is this day Ordered by the Commons  
Assembled in Parliament, That Sir *Edward Aiscough*, and Sir *Iohn Wray*, doe  
from this House give thankes unto Master  
*Tuckney* of *Boston*, and Master *Coleman* of  
*Blyton* in *Lincolneshire* for the great paines  
they tooke in the Sermons they this day  
preached at the intreaty of this House at  
*St. Margerets Westminster*, it being the day  
of publique Humiliation, and to desire  
them to Print their Sermons. And it is  
Ordered that no man shall presume to  
Print their Sermons without Licence un-  
der their hands.

*H. Elsyng, Cler. Parl. D. Com.*

---

**I** Authorise *Christopher Meredith* or his Assignes to  
print my Sermon above-named, and no man else.

THOMAS COLEMAN.

This is entred according to Order.  
*Henry Walley.*



THE  
CHRISTIANS  
COVRSE AND COM-  
PLAINT, BOTH IN THE  
pursuit of Happinesse desired, and  
for Advantages slipped in that pursuit :

A SERMON PREACHED  
to the Honorable House of Com-  
mons on the monethly Fast day,  
*August 30. 1643. At S<sup>t</sup>. Margarets  
Church in Westminster.*

By THOMAS COLEMAN, late Minister of Gods  
Word at *Blyton in Lincolnshire*, and now Preacher at  
*St. Peters Cornhil London* : one of the Divines  
in this present Assembly.

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Published by Order of the said House.

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*Brethren, I count not my selfe to have attained any thing, but this one thing  
I doe, I forget that which is behinde, endeavour my selfe to that  
which is before ;*

*And presse hard toward the marke — Phil. 3. 13, 14.*

*Oh that it were with me, as in the moneths of old ! Iob 29. 2.*

---

LONDON,  
Printed by *I. L.* for *Christopher Meredith* at the Sign of the Crane  
in *Pauls Church-yard*, M. D. C. XLII.

To the Honorable House of Commons  
now Assembled in Parliament.

**S**ome, and duty command the tender of my best respects to be premised; I see, others doe it, I know, I owe it, and I would not be either singular, or unmannerly: Because then I must speake, let me speake as the words of God, nay, let me speak in the words of God. Nothing is at this time more necessary then the spirit of discerning, whereby we may be taught to know chaffe from Wheate: Nothing more complained of then inabilitie this way: But some are malignant and wilfully so; a rod for such fooles backs: and there is reason in it, I would doe both these; Give eyes to the blinde, and stripes to the bud; that the one might see, the other not sinne. Two Scripture stories doe the Worke, thence we have from the one a direction to know, what is iust; from the other, correction of him, that is not iust. The first is that of Abijah in his warre against Ieroboam, 2 Chron. 13. both sides pretended Religions defence, and Kingdomes liberties: Abijah argues the cause, and makes this the subiect of his Remonstrance, or manifesto, even to undeceive the people, who by these pretences were distracted: He tells them, the thing, for which he tooke up Armes, was nothing else but to preserve to posteritie those ancient Priviledges, which were the undoubted birth-right of the stocke of David. Why? But Ieroboam Will say as much; so we are in statu quo prius, our iudgements see no cleerer. Beleeve then neither of our words, (for so he seemes to goe on) but looke over all Arguments which in our silence doe best hold forth the truth, and realitie of the one party above the other. First, on Ieroboams side, minde, what kind of men stocke to him, and follow him; his Army consists of Atheisticall ruffians, empty men, men of fortune, sons of Belliall: And are such likely to maintaine Religion? vers. 7.

Secondly, minde what kinde of Religion is practised in his Army; with him are the golden Calves, which he made for gods, vers. 8. Can he pretend to stand for, or to fight the Battailles of the Lord, that hath in his Army superstition and formalitie for his Religion; mans inventions, Idolatrous worship, and Masses for his devotion?

Thirdly, minde what kinde of affection his side beares to the Priests

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

of the Lord, the sonnes of Aaron, and the Levites. Is it likely Ieroboam will preserve Religion, that persecutes away his faithfull Ministers? Before this warre betweene him, and me, net a godly Minister was suffered to stay in the Land, and since these combustions not one of them dare in their houses abide the coming of his wicked Army; he hath driven away the Ministers of the Lord, vers. 10. They flie from him and his, to fenced places, and fortified Townes for their refuge.

Fourthly, And in their roomes, and places he entertaines Priests like those of other Lands, a vile generation of men, a ministry little differing from, nay like that of Popery: These are the Characters of Ieroboam and his army. And here I cannot containe my selfe, but needs speake the truth and say, that, as I meditated this story, and set it down with admiration, and amazement of spirit: So I doe from my soule wish, that every particular person within this Kingdome, would impartially, without respect to one side, or other, with sinceritie, and seriousnes minde these things, to wit, which army consists of, or invites, and retaines Atheists, Infidels, Papists, and the like; which side hath Popish Masses, Superstitious Worships, cold formes in the service of God; which side persecutes godly Ministers, painfull Preachers, not suffering them to stay, to preach, to be; which side is stored with Popish Priests, doth harbour all our drunken debauched Clergy, our idle, non-preaching, dumbe Ministry, our ambitious tyrannicall Prelacy; and the sinke and dregs of the times, the receptacles of the filth of the present, and former ages, our spirituall-Courts-men. This were indeed a meanes to deceive.

But Abijah goeth on with his argument. In the next place (saith he) on my part; and in the army that follows me; First, observe we have the Lord for our God, that is, we retaine Gods worship in its puritie, We have not forsaken him, take notice, We expelled Popery, introduced that Reformation we have, and labour to perfect the same, We have not forsaken him.

Secondly, Minde what kinde of Ministers flocke to us, and we receive, and provide for; With us are the Priests, the Ministers of the Lord, sonnes of Aaron and Levites, such who have been diligent, and painfull in their callings, zealous for the Lord and his worke, desirous and careful to have it done us. He commands. We keepe the Charge of the Lord, but you have forsaken him.

Thirdly, We seeke Gods blessing upon the Worke, and goe on in his strength, and a dependance thereon; With us is God in the Chiefe, we begin with him, and his messengers, they encourage us, they lift up their

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

voices in prayers and exhortations to the God of Battels, which is a strong Alarme against you. Consider, Apply, and give sentence. A very memorable example! Thus for direction.

But against Scripture, and experience; Are not many of us strangely misled, our Land hath long cryed out of violence, and wrong, burdenuous impositions, infringings of Liberties, seizing on Priviledges, and such other; Groaning under the illegall pressures of Monopolizing Caterpillers, corroding their estates, and the Arbitrary innovations of a Prelaticall faction, Wounding their consciences, crying out for a Parliament, a Parliament, as the onely hope for redresse against these incurable Gangrenes; Now the remedy is come, and like impatient patients, We strike, and struggle against the person and hand that should heale us; we may have libertie, yet we will not use it rather: That your Clergy should be of such a meane alloy I marvell not, as men living for themselves, and placing all their contentments in the present; But that any of the Nobilitie, and Gentry should so farre forget themselves, is beyond all example. And I am perswaded, that the succeeding Ages will esteeme those Records, and Writings, that shall transmit their names, and doings to them, to be but the counterfeit worke of some envious Malignant, as holding it impossible, that such a spirit should ever fall within the compasse of an English breast.

Moses, Exod. 21. 1, 2, 3, 4 leaves to his people an ordinance, that when an Hebrew servant hath served sixe yeares, he should then be free; but if he be one of such a servile temper, that had rather be a slave still; Oh, I love my Master, I Will not be free; then shall he be brought to some publique place, and there have his eare bored with an awle, and branded for a slave, and so let him be a slave for ever. We have been many sixe yeares in service, a doore is opened for our freedome; If continuance under bondage, have so naturalized slavery to our disposition, that we desire no better condition; though you would thinke it uncharitable, to wish that all such might have their eares bored, as a brand of an ignoble heart: Yet I hope I may without preindice say, that had you lived under the Iudicials of Moses, you may see how you should have been used. But God hath given you (Honourable, and respected) a more noble, and Christian spirit, which I beseech God to continue, and increase, though he keepe you yet in pursuit, from the fruition of all your and our desires, yet beare up still, in due time you shall reape if you faint not. In this following Sermon I principally endeavoured this, that you should not be troubled, as if this condition were without a fore-going instance, as if some new trouble

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

were befallen, and such as is not common to Gods people, as if the Lord had created a new thing in our Land and not in being long agoe: for call or read now, and many of the Lords peoples states will be found answerable to ours, and to many of the Saints in the same condition We may turne: So I understand Eliphaz his words, Iob 5. 1. Gods wisdom can see reason enough, Why he dealeth thus; that which appears to us, may be charged on man, and his losse of advantages, for wast of either of iudgement or truth, as will appeare in the maine of the discourse. You command the employment, as of right you might, you heard it delivered, as of dutie ye ought, and incouraged with your approbation, according to your Order I present it published. If there be any thing therein, that savours of man, let your godly wisdom pardon it (for that which is in it of God, will command acceptance.) It proceeds from him, that had rather sinke with you, and your cause, then stand with your adversaries; I blesse God, I have suffered much for you; and againe doe inioy much by you. The most wise God in his, not our, time be mercifull unto you, and give you peace, for in your peace is the Lands peace. And the same God and Father of spirits, inlarge the hearts of all the faithfull in this Land, to be daily petitioners to the throne of Grace to refresh your soules, as with all comforts, so particularly this, the desired returne of our dearest So-  
veraigne, whose presence would not onely be an advantage in the pursuit, but even the fruition of this happinesse pursued. The Lord hasten it in his time, The Lord hasten it at this time.

Septem. II. 1643.

So prays

Yours to be commanded in the  
worke of the Gospell of the  
Lord Jesus,

THOMAS COLEMAN.



A  
SERMON PREACHED  
BEFORE THE HONOV-  
RABLE House of Commons, at the late  
publique Fast, *August 30.* 1643.

CHAP. I.

Containing — } *the Text.*  
                          } *the Introduction.*  
                          } *the Coherence.*



You have heard even now feelingly propounded, and largely discussed the cure of our Calamities, the redresse of our grievances, by that Balme from *Gilead*, that Physician, which is able to recover the health of the daughter of the Lords people: I must entreat attention whilest I speake of the Calamities themselves: And I doe heartily pray, that the Cure, and the Calamitie were as neere the one to the other, as by the providence of God, we both that speake this day are in Text, and time. For I must draw you but one verse back, and offer to you the ground of my present thoughts from

The Text in  
the morning  
of Master  
*Tuckney* was  
*Jerem. 8. 22.*

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JEREM. 8. 20.

*The Harvest is past, the Summer is ended,  
and we are not saved.*

**L**Et one with seriousnesse view this Chapter, and therein observe the threats of a just God, *vers. 1.* and the fruitlesnesse of a sinfull people, *vers. 4.* and marke well, what end with them the Lord did make, and as in *Israel*, he shall observe Gods resolve to have a ground, so in *England* a parallel. A stiff-necked people, *vers. 6.* vainly presuming, *vers. 8.* A false dealing Prophet, *vers. 10.* slightly healing, *vers. 11.* have brought the forbearing thoughts of a most patient God to a determed execution.

Looke upon them, and us, and see us both, flying, fearing, crying. First, flying to walled Townes, defended Cities, and there silently sitting, and earnestly looking for a redresse that comes not: *vers. 14.* Secondly, fearing the furie of a snorting horse, the depopulation of a terrible Armie, and the smartfull biting of Cockatrices, that will not be charmed, *verse. 17.* mercilesse Cavaliers. Thirdly, crying and bemoaning her unabilitie to beare: My heart is faint, *vers. 18.* her just deserts, The provocation of God, *vers. 19.* and the duration of her misery, *vers. 20.* *The Harvest is past, &c.*

This is (as I conceive) the Prophets drift, the Chapters summe, in all which, it cannot be denied, but our condition is resembled; But all of us this day, (as we have too evident occasion) close fully in the Complaint. *The Harvest, &c.*

*The division of the Text.*

The words themselves at this present shall be viewed, and handled under a double capacitie, as expressing,

First, their pursuit of a helpe much desired, long deferred, salvation, (temporall I meane) we have long wanted, desired, prayed for, hoped, pursued, and expected, and we are no neerer yet, at least not in fruition, *We are not saved.*

Secondly, their complaint for advantages unhappily lost: we grew confident, that Harvest would have victualed us, Summer would have freed us: yet, yet we are not saved. *The Harvest is past, the Summer is ended, and we are not saved.*

These are the parts. The words readily afford the method, my thoughts have propounded. The points will be answerable, the one shewing our condition what it is, the other our complaint, how just it is. The first must certainly make us looke to God, the last may happily lay a blame on man; of both in their order: In the handling of which, if I a little exceed my accustomed brevitie, the preparation on my part, the expectation on yours, the occasion on both, together with the day, and Audience, shall all hold forth such a satisfaction, that each may, and will say, Is there not a cause?

## CHAP. II.

## I. The first point.

Their pursuit of helpe desired, deferred.

The point { Grounded.  
Propounded.  
Illustrated.

I.  
Targum in  
locum.

THE speech, or words are spoken by the Church of the *Jewes*, or by the Prophet representing their person, so the *Chaldee* takes it, and therefore interpreteth this clause [saith the Congregation] in the midst of the verse.

2.

The occasion is not certaine, Interpreters doe but conjecture, perhaps the miserie of that Nation in the dayes of *Manasseh*, or rather some of their following Kings, or it may be the *Babylonian* siege, which put the Citie into confusion, or the Captivitie it selfe, which laid the Countrey desolate. The duration of this last makes it the most probable: Howsoever this is certaine, some miserie it was, and that miserie was long, and pressing. Harvest and Summer, perhaps many, came, and past, and no salvation.

3.

The Phrase is figurative, a part for the whole, and one whole for many. The Harvest, and Summer, for the whole yeere, and one yeere for divers yeeres; *The Harvest is past*, many Harvests, many Summers, many yeeres. *Transferunt Hyemes & aestates plures, Sannithus*; yeere added to yeere, and yet we are not saved.

Isa. 29. 1.

Whence I gather:

Doctrine.

Tis no new course, (but that which oft hath been here-

heretofore) to see the people of God long in the pursuit, not fruition of some desirable condition. It is their portion allotted them, we may oftener see a Church, a Land in the race, then at the Goale, pressing toward the prize, then in possession of the prize. Of this none can doubt, that hath any acquaintance with, first, his owne soule; secondly, the Scriptures of God; thirdly, or our present condition: all seale to this truth.

First, with his owne soule, that is skilled at home, and sees there:

1. What strength corruption still retaines, how much of sinne, and how many sinnes remaine un-mortified; nay, Is it not almost the top of our happinesse, if we finde our selves in the pursuit, especially, if active, if unwearied therein? and take we not content, if we can say, sinne reigns not? I assure you, if I know any thing of the inward man, tis this, and this is the best, we are subduing, we have not subdued every man his owne concupiscence.

2. What strivings we have in prayer. Do we seeke, and pray, and begge? we want then; minde your daily practises, the petitions of and in your daily employments, Prayer argues both want and pursuit.

3. The affection, and temper of his heart in duties, in Graces; in the one, how superficially we act: in the other, how little we have. Is not thine, and thine, and thine heart defective, as mine? If we all affitme, let us all affirme, that our owne soules tell us, we are not yet, what we should be, what we would be.

2. With Scripture instances; many you your selves know, I dare not doubt it, one onely suits now well, therefore I presse it, *Zech. 7. 1. & seq.* The Church there had been long without Priest, without Sacrifice,

without Temple, for these, their eyes ran down teares, they wept, fasted, and humbled their souls, yeere by yeere, for many yeeres together, even 70 yeeres, or neerer (as is probable) 170 yeeres, even till their throat was dry, they were weary with praying, and glad to take the first step of an approaching mercy, to give over their task: Here was a people long in pursuit, long out of fruition, what would we say, or rather what would we not say, If God should deale with us thus? My thoughts are amazed to thinke of the amazed thoughts, that then would seise upon, if not sinke our spirits: and in truth I am oft astonished to consider, what would be the issue, if God should give to drinke such wine of astonishment, and therefore doe heartily pray, that what ever be our condition, we may never reject our confidences, and say, there is no prospering in them.

3. With our present state; Are we where we would be? Have we already received the crowne? Is there no more to do? no part of the race yet unrun? What? Are all our miseries cured, our feares vanished, our wants supplied? Is there now no towne in danger? no countie in distresse? none that have hazarded their all, for God and you in prison? If I, then alas the wound is not whole, the cure is not wrought! Can you, or any say, We are saved; when divers of you dare not visit your houses, nor divers of us our Churches, our people? We cannot, brethren, we cannot say, our miseries are cured, when as yet our towns are full of dolefull creatures, and Satyres dance in our houses, when our chambers are become the habitation of Dragons, and the daughters of the Owle doe cry in our desolate places, when *Iim* and *Ohim* sing in our Churches, and Pulpits; so that though we could wish, the time of our curing

curing were neere, yet the dayes of our misery are prolonged: *Isa. 13. ult.* And for our feares, say no lesse of them, then of our miseries: It fares with some according to the case of *Paul*; In feare, but not in distresse. Hath God given to any of us, as yet freedom? yet feare hath taken hold. Every towne fortifies, every person flies, yet feare follows. We are here in safetie yet, (and oh let the day thereof never see an evening!) but are we secure? The faithlesnesse of some, the flights of others, the doubts of all say no. Our feares are not settled, Wants indeed are yet not felt. But goe to some places, their harvest is spoiled, there is want of victuals; Goe to some townes, and they are burnt, there is want of houses; Goe to some people, and their Ministers are fled, or imprisoned, and there is want of teaching; Come hither, and because of the northerne troubles, here is, or at least feared, want of fewell; Goe to any place and see the sword drawne, and there is want of peace. In a word to passe on, both our miseries yet uncured, and our feares yet unsetled, and our wants yet unsupplied, evidence our happinesse to be but in *fieri*, in the pursuit, and give us just occasion to take up this peoples complaint, and make it ours; *The Harvest is past, the Summer is ended, and we are not saved*: Light is sowne for the righteous (saith *David*) *Psal. 97.* and it must have a time to ripen; we have now our seed-time of comfort, our harvest is not yet come, this is the winter of our hopes, our summer is not yet begun, no marvell then, that as yet we are not saved.

## C H A P. III.

The point yet cleared } <sup>1. For the Truth</sup>  
 } <sup>2. For the Ground</sup> of it.  
 } <sup>3. For the Exercise</sup>

## Sect. 1.

## The truth of it.

FOR the truth of it, which is the first, It is already cleared, past denyall; I mentioned the Jews long pursuit of happinesse, *Zech. 7. 1.* which yet was detained many yeeres; Here was no fruition. Let us yet by the mouth of two witnessess strengthen it, and those two above exception. 1. Of God himselte, *Exod. 6. 3.* I appeared (saith he) to *Abraham*, to *Isaac*, to *Jacob*, by God Almightye; But my name *Iehovah* did I not make knowne to them. The name *Iehovah* was knowne, as is to be read, and no difference is evident, But that he was knowne by the one, as by the other. But to *Abraham* and the other Fathers I shewed my selfe a promising God, in respect of future favours to be injoyed, and in the meane space was, A God all-sufficient to uphold them: But my name *Iehovah* I was not known to them, (for the Originall) both to expresse that God and his Name is all one. Also, chiefly to teach, that notwithstanding these promises, yet in the performance of them, an accomplishing God, they knew him not, All these died in hope not having obtained the promises, they only by the eye of faith, saw them a farre off. They came not to *Canaan*, nor the comforts thereof, called the promises, *vers. 13.* nor to *Christ*, and the cleare sight of him, called the promise, *v. 39.*

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Note that God is never called *Iehovah*, till things are brought to perfection, therefore all the while the world was creating, and in all the discourses of *Isa* and his friends (but once, where speech is of the creatures) God is never stiled so.

Heb 11.

A promising God they saw, they knew, and rested on him; but a performing God they found him not. So, beside Christian Writers, even some of the \* Jewish \* *Iarchi.* Doctors have taught, though another deride them *Abarbinell.* for the same; but he knew not Christ in whom all the promises are yea and amen for evermore.

2. Of the Prophet, or of the same God in the mouth of his Prophet, *Mich. 7. vers.* the last, Where speaking of, and confidently assuring the people, that upon them should come all comfortable accomplishments of whatsoever promises lay stored up in the decke, and treasury of Gods unchangeable purpose, he saith: *Thou wilt performe thy truth to Iacob, Mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworne to our fathers from the dayes of old.* That is, thou wilt give unto us all thy fore-promised favours: for in all these divine benefits, there are two things. The promise, and the performance; and these two may be said, to be bottomed upon two severall Attributes, Mercy, and Truth. God is mercifull, therefore he promiseth: God is true, therefore he performeth. *Abraham* the first of the fathers, he had the promise; *Iacob*, (By him understand posteritie) he had the performance. Thou wilt performe thy truth to *Iacob*, the accomplishment to thy people; which was mercy to *Abraham*, in the dayes before; not truth to *Iacob*, and mercy to *Abraham*, as the English hath it, but without a copulative; truth to *Iacob*, mercy to *Abraham*. The efficacy of thy truth shall be given to thy people now, according to the efficacy of thy mercy, to wit, thy promise made to *Abraham* of old. See here a promise made, but the performance deferred: The Church in the person of the Prophet pursuing, claiming. Here are harvests passed, summers ended, yeares to yeares added, and yet a promise



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 mise not performed. From *Abraham* to *Micahs* dayes passed severall hundreds of yeares, yet we reade the Prophet speaking in the future still; Thou wilt give, thou wilt performe; which teacheth clearly, what for the present we presse: Pursuit, not fruition, to be often the Churches condition. This is the truth.

## Sect. II.

The Ground of } In Gods } Sovereaigntie.  
 it either }        } Respect of his.  
 } from man, That be } may be fit.  
 }                       } might wait.

## \* I. In God.

FOR the Ground and reason of this point: Why a Church is long in pursuit, of what they eagerly desire, and upon good warrant they expect.

I. We may resolve it into Gods Sovereaintie over the world, and particularly man, who is limited in his working, and the dispensation of the acts of his providence, by no other rule, then that of his own pleasure; Whatsoever he will, that doth he in heaven and in earth. And therefore even towards his own Church and people, works variously, lengthening, or shortning the laborious pursuit of their desires, as he in his wisdom sees fit: giving a quicke, or slow returne to the prayers of his suppliant at divers times.

I. To one a pressing want is supplied, before he aske, so ready is our gracious God to doe good; The order of the Scriptures expressions. *Dauids* experience, and Gods direct assertion are undeniable evidences. The Scripture, *Isa. 59. 1.* sets helping before hearing, the worke

worke of the hand before that of the eare: Is the Lords hand shortned, that it cannot save? or is his eare heavy, that it cannot heare? Man first heares, and then helps, and that not certainly: But with God it is otherwise, so ready, so neere is our rocke of refuge to all that call, that the Prophet to expresse the same gives precedency in order, to that which in nature succeedeth. So *Abelda*. But that praying Prophet *David*, inferiour to none in the sweet experiences of a prevailing prayer with a hearing God. Howsoever at other times delayed, till that he was even wearied therewith, yet *Psal.* 32. 5. joynes the act of helpe to the very purpose of petitioning. I said, I will confesse against my selfe my sin; and upon this purpose thou tookest away, forgavest it; nay, I found the iniquitie of my sin, the guilt, the punishment was already gone. Thou hast forgiven. So the Originall. Adde Gods own assertion, or promise, how a people ennobled with the prerogative of being the seed of the blessed of the Lord should be dealt with; It shall come to passe, before they pray, I will answer: Here is no long pursuit, this people staves not long in the endeavour. But in the fruition, As the dayes of a tree are the dayes of my people, here is duration, that is a blessing; Nay, as the dayes of that tree, the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden, are the dayes of my servants, here is fruitfulnessse, that is the blessing of a blessing, and my Elect shall long enjoy, grow old by enjoying the work of their hands, the fruit of their lips, *Isa.* 65. 22, 23, 24. Thus God sometimes.

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To another, the prayer and the issue, the petition and the prevalency are contemporaries. This poore man prays, and God grants; A praying heart, and a granting God are not farre asunder. Even whilest they

2.

speake I will heare, in the place before cited. Delays may discourage, where faith sees not cleare, and the eye of faith is dimme in the hearts of many, chiefly in cloudy dayes; here faith is upheld by feeling, and when through weaknesse we cannot be led by the heart, we are led by the hand. Whilest I was speaking, saith *Daniel*, Chap. 9. 20, 21. and praying, &c. even whilest I was speaking (note this is remarkable, the doubling is emphaticall) in prayer; The man *Gabriel* came, &c. and *vers.* 23. In the beginning of the supplications, the word went out, the decree to accomplish this great delivery, for which thou standst before God in prayer. Here is no deferment, *Daniel* is not long in suspence; Thus God other whiles.

3. To a third, though the request goe before, yet the speeding follows close at the heeles, thus oft in the Gospels, upon their supplications were the lame restored to their limmes, the blind to their sight, the sicke to their health. For though God be moved by no motive, but that of his own good pleasure, (for it is not possible, that any externall thing should incline the eternall God to be good) yet will I be fought unto for all this, saith he, by you, oh house of Israel; Thus God most commonly. Why then are his feet so long in coming? even because he pleaseth: why are his people so long on their knees? his Church so long in the dust? Why? He is a great *King*, and unto such a one, who may, who dare say, What dost thou? This is the first.

2. We may speake after the manner of men, and say, God keeps his long in pursuit, long in expectation, because he delights to heare them pray, when they as *Nebuchadnezzar* are at rest in their houses, flourishing in their palaces, when God makes their mountaine to stand strong, when they promise to themselves

selves securitie, even durable securitie, and ease, as  
 sometimes *Job*; I shall die in my nest, or according to *Job* 29:18.  
 the *Hebrew*, With my nest, and multiply my dayes,  
 as the sand, as \* that sand. But the word in *Rab.* fig. כחול \*  
 signifies the Phoenix, and he may allude to the story of  
 that Bird, I shall live to the age of a Phoenix, and then  
 expire with my nest, as that Bird doth: I say, when it  
 is thus with the people of God, obstinate stiff-necked-  
 nesse may dull their eares, and harden their hearts  
 from Gods feare, *I spake to them in their prosperitie, and*  
*they would not heare*, *Jer.* 22. 21. But, change their states,  
 and let God turne his hand upon them, shew them  
 hard things, then they will cry unto the Lord in their  
 distresse, *Psal.* 107. In their affliction they will seeke  
 him diligently, early in the morning: Now this ear-  
 ly seeking rejoyceth the Lord, his soule takes pleasure  
 therein; God loves to see his people in a praying po-  
 sture, and to heare them in a weeping tune. *Shew me,*  
*Oh my Dove, in the holes of the rocks, in the secret of the*  
*staires thy countenance, and cause me to heare thy voyce:*  
 the loving title argues no displeasure, the retired place  
 doth more then intimate prayer; *for thy voyce is sweet,*  
*thy countenance pleasant*, *Cant.* 2. 14. A sincerely de-  
 jected face, and a feelingly praying voyce are melo-  
 dious before God; his meat, and drinke, his musicke;  
 and therefore he deals with us, as we with Musicians,  
 deferre their reward, that they may play the more;  
 our recovery delayed, that we may pray the more. A  
 right hearted prayer, is a well tuned Instrument to  
 God. Thou hast heard the prayer of the poore. By  
 what meanes is this priviledge granted? Thou wilt  
 prepare their heart, put that in a right frame, and then  
 thou wilt delightfully listen; *Cause thine eares to heare,*  
*Psal.* 10. 17. This is the second.

3. \* *In man.*

3. Or thirdly, we may safely say, when we cannot deny our condition to be as a race, pressing toward the prize, that the cause is in man himselfe: we doe runne, that we may obtaine; yet though we runne, we doe not obtaine, we still are in a petitioning, not a possessing condition; salvation is still farre from our dwellings, and that upon one, or both these causes following.

1. *The first Cause.*

1. Because he is not fit; a pre-disposednesse, a futable temper of heart is necessary to make him capable. These externall generall mercies come not, but on a subject rightly prepared. A tractablenesse of heart must be a forerunner to the receipt of the benefit: If you will beleeve it, this is *Elias: Iohn Baptist was Elias*, whether they would beleeve it, or no; but to them he was not; his Ministry would not be effectuell, as in the power, and spirit of *Elias*, without this foregoing believe: *If thou beleevest, (saith Christ) thou shalt see the power of God*: The *Posse* of that working, which evidenceth Gods omnipotency, depends not on man, the *Esse* (as it seemes) doth: *He did not many workes there, because of their unbelieve*. Which being cleare, I could wish both to enedger our endeavours, and to remove out of the way, what yet withholdeth that the Lord whom we seeke suddenly might come to our Land, and Church: That we would all with some care observe, both what this fittednesse we so much presse is, that opens a way for the descent of all pursued blessings, as also what hinders our attainment of the same.
1. First, what this fittednesse pre-required of a Lands Inhabitants

Inhabitants for the receiving of desired mercies, is, we may learne from the story of the Centurion, *Luke 7. 1, &c.* This Centurion pursued a mercy he wanted, both his friends, and himselfe plead his cause before Christ, either of them bring the best arguments to move they can, and either of them such, as are most suitable for them to bring. These arguments briefly noted will shew us, what qualifications are required to make a people capable of the fruition of their desires, and these, as may be seene, are foure.

First, a Publique spirit. Secondly, a Holy spirit. Thirdly, an Humble spirit. Fourthly, a Beleeving spirit. The two former his friends use, the two latter himselfe urges: Had he himselfe urged the former, being evidenced by acts externall, he might have beene taxable of boasting pride: and the two latter being internall qualities of the minde, his friends could not know; but of each in a word.

First, a Publike spirit: He loves our Nation, one that valued the publike above the private, as knowing his private to be included in the publike; forgetting private injuries, when the case of the publike comes to be debated. So did *Afrates* a very old Monk, he was injuriously expelled by the Emperour *Valens*, and being espied by the said *Valens*, as he departed, and asked, Whither goest thou? I goe (said he) to pray for thy Empire. This offered wrong cannot silence my dutie, I desire thy Empires peace; because in it is the Churches quiet. And againe, not minding Personall paines in comparison of the Churches good, I loved this Prince, *viz. Theodosius*, saith *Ambrose*, in his funerall Oration, because when his soule was ready to depart from his body, he had more care of the Church, then of the dolours of his death. You have

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heard of the noble fact of *Phineas* in his zeale for the prevention of the plague, and obtained to himselfe a good reward; and of the open courage of *Azariah*, How precious in his eies were the holy things of God, who fearing not the displeasure of the King, put his life into his hand; and with an *Esther*-like resolve, *If I perish, I perish*, resisted the rashnesse of that man, and for the same obtained this good report from the Pen of the Spirit: He it was that ministred in the Priests Office in the House of God at *Jerusalem*, *1 Chron. 6. 10.* Many Priests are in that Genealogie, as well as he, all which executed that office as well as he: yet so eminent was he for this publique act, that God intitles it, and him for it, as if none had discharged their calling but he alone: See the place. On the contrary, it stands as a brand, and that of disgrace too, that in that publique forwardnesse that *Ezra* found in the *Iewes* at *Babylon*, the Issue, and posteritie of *Adonikam* for their backwardnesse should be stiled the hindermost; And of the sonnes of *Adonikam* the last, *Ezra 8. 13.* Publique spirits are pretious spirits, for as they become instrumentall helpes to the publique good, so they make themselves capable of partaking of the felicitie of Gods chosen: The Centurions love of the Nation, got to him love from the Nation, and from the Saviour of the Nations, who thereupon did heale his servant.

2. Secondly, an Holy spirit, a religious disposednesse, He hath built us a Synagogue; his care is commendable, he loves our welfare, & that reaches to the soule; Gods waies are best, to them he leades us, he drawes us, he drives us. The Synagogue was for instruction, petition, correction; here as in a Schoole, they were instructed in Gods Law; here was an Oratory, whither

therat times they went up to pray ; and here were offenders punished, as severall passages in the Gospels shew : A Synagogue served to better their knowledge, their devotion, their conversation ; this was the Centurions care, this devout mans aime ; Christs servants by him were helped in a religious being, and his servant by Christ was helped to a healthfull being. He built us a Synagogue. Thus far his friends spake.

Thirdly, an Humble spirit ; Himselfe goes on, *I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roose.* This is humilitie in both the parts ; looking upon himselfe, his thoughts are meane and modest ; on Christ, his apprehensions are high and glorious ; he thought his house not worthy of Christ, but so he made his soule a fit habitation for Christ : *I dwell in eternitie,* (saith God) *with him also, that is of an humble and contrite spirit.* This humilitie made him fit to receive, to receive even the saving graces of the Spirit, which, as water powred into a vessell, rests not, till come to the botome, so settles most quietly in the hearts of the humble.

Fourthly, and lastly, a Beleeving spirit : He that comes to God, must beleeve, that God is, and is a rewarder : O God, the great and powerfull, is oft the first entrance into the Saints prayers ; *onely speake the word* (saith this good man) *and my servant shall live.* And in this believe marke how he confines himselfe, Thou canst make my servant sound ; for all diseases are thy servants, and thou canst command them. I know that by my selfe, *I also have servants under me, I say to one, Go, he goeth, to another, Come, he cometh :* Thy power is not inferiour, speake to the Feaver, Goe, it goeth ; to Health, Come, it cometh ; for I beleeve that thou art Christ the power of God. We speake not of



the degree, we look for the truth; if it be as a graine of Mustardseed: The Jewish Doctors teach no lesse, by the finnes, that Fishes must have; if cleane, they understand faith, and say they, If a Fish have but one finne, it is cleane: *Rambam*. Beleeve in the Lord, and thou shalt prosper.

2. Secondly, what the contrary is, that, that unfits, holds off mercies, hinders good things from us, makes a separation betweene us and our God. *David* in one phrase, *Psal.* 10. 4. seemes to give a full cause thereof; *The wicked will not seeke after God*. It meanes three things that hinder good, according to a threefold signification of the word.

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First, *Selfe conceit*, *The height of his countenance*, loftie esteeme of himselfe; God will give grace to the humble, but such rich loftie ones he sends emptie away.

Secondly, *Eagernesse* in, and after temporals, *Latitude of his desire*, neither can the eye, or the heart minde two things at once: The love of the World, and the love of the Word, like two Ballances, cannot both ascend into a mans affection at the same time; If one arise, the other settles; and so the contrary. The Pharisees laughed at Christs preaching, because they were Covetous, saith the Evangelist.

Thirdly, *Hatred of Gods people*, *Greatnesse of his anger*, those that eat up Gods people, as they eat up bread, will not call upon God; look upon hearts thus wrong byassed, and conclude, that neither they, nor any for them shall see good.

## 2. The second Cause.

2. That they may practise this needfull dutie of waiting; God will have his waite; He expects it, and his Word

Word oft preffeth it : Neither is the good mans prayer alwaies suddenly granted ; Nor the good Gods promise alwaies speedily performed, but the one and the other withheld, to put us to waite, that so we may be blessed ; Blessed are all those that waite for him. In such a pursuit then of a prayers successe, and a promises accomplishment, (though God should hold his long in suspence) take we heed of dashing our selves upon false conclusions, or making wrong inferences from the same, which we may easily doe, thus ; Have I a promise, or a precept to justifie the cause ; a direction or an example to warrant my pursuite : *And yet is not the hurt of the daughter of my people healed ?* Surely then, either God is not pleased with the courses we take, or mindes not the Cause we maintaine, or hath not chosen the Agents we use. I say, in such a case, be warned ; thou canst not infer any of these ; For grant, that Harvest is passed, and Summer neere ended, yet we not saved ; notwithstanding, thou neither canst, nor mayest say :

God dislikes the meanes we use, he is full of our prayers, and fastings, our teares, and dayes of humiliation are an abomination to him, he requires not these things at our hands. For, the very wayes and meanes that God hath commanded and appointed his to walkein, to use, may sometime not speed : *Vrim* and *Thummim* were meanes of Gods owne institution, by which he was to be inquired of, to which he had both by word, and practise ingaged himselfe ; Dreames were in those dayes almost the ordinary wayes, by which God revealed himselfe to his children the Prophets ; yet King *Saul* in an exigency addressing himselfe to the one, and expecting direction from the other, found successe in neither : *Saul* inquired of the Lord,

but he answered him not neither by Dreames, Vrim, or Prophets, *1 Sam.* 28. 6.

2. God neglects the Cause; though the Ship of his habitation, wherein his children saile, be tossed, and in danger, yet he sleepeth: This worke, we uphold; he regards not, he sees not, he cares not for. This may not be, for by this delay,

1. God corrects our dulnesse in the prosecution, sometimes even lively Christians settle to a darke and dull condition, as if spiritually dead, *Lam.* 3. 6. then though they cry and pray, yet God shuts out their prayer, *v.* 8. until they return: even so perhaps it is now; our hearts are dampe, our prayers dull, our humiliations formall; they want spirit, they want life, and God with free mercy onely satisfies every living thing, *Psal.* 145. 16.

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2.

Or secondly, God by this delay discovers some false hearts, faithlesse persons, treacherous sinners, whom he will not have to taste of the good which he hath laid up in store for them that feare him, for those that trust in him before the sonnes of men, *Psal.* 37. *Israel* must wander in the wilder nesse, and be in pursuit, not fruition of the Land of *Canaan* fortie Harvests, and fortie Summers, till all that murmuring generation were destroyed: The sonnes of the handmaid must not be inheritors with the sonnes of the free woman. My servants (saith God) shall eat, but you shall be hungry; Behold, my servants shall drinke, but you shall be thirsty; behold, my servants shall rejoyce, but you shall be ashamed; behold my servants shall sing, but you shall cry, &c. *Isa.* 65. 13.

3.

Or lastly, he chastiseth our selfe-dependance, God stayes to unbottom us, and to drive us from our own strength, to make us sit loose from all things, but himselfe: We are apt to looke to our religion, or to our strength;

strength; to our duties, or to our other doings; God hunts us from all. Wo, saith he, to those that are at rest, Amos 6. in great security; Why? is that a fault? No, but that are at rest \* in, or because of *Sion*: *Sion* was the hill, on which the Temple was built; the Temple the place, where the sacrifices, and religious actions were performed; woe to such, that promise rest to themselves for them, and that trust in the mountaine of *Samaria*, in the strength of the creature, wit of man, legges of horse, Forts, Fortifications, multitude of Armies, defence of Towers, Castles, or the like; Why, who doth so? Who! all naturall men, these are their onely rocks, and refuges; either their externall power, or their externall piety must helpe, or they are lost; these are called and are the chiefe of the Nations: But I hope Gods people looke higher: They doe, yet the advise is not unseasonable even in respect of them: There is an inclination, a hankering even in sanctified hearts after these tottering supports, *to which the house of Israel also come*, even they sometime looke to their performance, and outward probabilities; thus making over-much hast against the nature of faith, whereas the best, the onely way is silently to waite for that salvation, that time, manner, meanes of salvation, which the Lord will bring: *Lam. 3. 26.*

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Neither mayest thou say, God dis-respects the persons that act: Grant, that God hath suffered them to be foiled, yet beleeve him in what he sayes, (and surely, he knows his own affections best) *They shall be as if I had not cast them off*, *Zech. 10. 6.* in the same respect, and value as before, nay perhaps more; for thus:

First, he prepares them to receive a mercy with sweetnesse; How triumphantly in the person of the Church did *Deborah* celebrate *Israels* deliverance

from *Iabins* hard pressures! O my soule, thou hast trodden downe strength, *Judg. 5. 21.* So comfortable are gleames of peace, after stormes of warre, that we shall with *David*, all make an acclamation, *Blesse the Lord, O my soule, and all that is within me praise his holy Name.*

2. Secondly, thus he evidenceth his owne way of walking, his usuall course: The vision is yet for an appointed time; expect not the performance suddenly, for the time thereof is not yet: *Hab. 2. 3.* Yet question not the issue, for at the last it shall speake, and not lie, though it linger, and (as we preach now) keep us long in pursuit, yet waite for it, for it will come; it will come, and will not faile.

3. Thirdly, He makes by this course our condition exemplar, that the next, or an after age (in case they should be dealt with thus) might be refreshed with this of ours, as their instance; for many things fall upon the Church and people of God for example: Christs sufferings (besides their maine) had this in them, to be a patterne for us to consider of, lest we should be wearied, and faint in our mindes, *Heb. 12. 3.* and *Psalm. 110.* the last; He, (*viz.* Christ) shall drinke of the brooke of misery, and trouble, in the way, that he walked here: Therefore by that his example he shall lift up a head, support many a sinking spirit; and to this end he dranke thereof.

Sect. 3.

*For the exercise of it.*

3. FOR the exercise and practise, that is, to speake to our direction in, and under this pursuit, Consider two things.

What

What is this condition pursued, from the fruition whereof we are long to our griefe, and hurt kept. Generally, it is any comfortable state, warranted by, and promised in the word of God. For it is our dutie, our wisdom, our happinesse, to labour after all the riches stored up in the blessed treasury of the promises, held forth to us in that booke; But particularly, The having of Gods wayes in their puritie, rightly hath the highest place in our desires, endeavours, and pursuit. To this labour we are excited, by Command, by Type, by Story.

I.

By Command, *Iosh. 22. 19.* If the land of your possessions be uncleane; Canaan was the type of the Church; if the way of serving God among you be corrupt, be mixt; Then passe you over to the land of the inheritance of the Lord, where the Tabernacle abides, and settle your selves there, seeke to the cleare fountaine of living water; Come out my people from Babylonish mixtures, and doe what you may to dwell in the Lords land, there the rivers cleare as CrySTALL flow from the throne of God, and of the Lambe.

I.

By Type, *Levit. 14. 34, &c.* How jealous ought we to be of every the least contagion, the appearance of defilement in Gods houses! If there be but as the plague of Leprosie, consult about it: If any additionals to Gods wayes prove suspicious, proceed thus,

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1. As they with this house, scrape it, and carry the filth away into an uncleane place: so did they with our worship and government in the dayes of *Edw.* the sixt.

2. If it still abide and spread, pull out those stones, that seeme to be infectious: so they did in *Queene Elizabeth* her dayes, labouring a second time in a farther degree of Reformation.

3. If it still appeare uncured, Down with it, down with it to the foundation, flicke and stone, top and bottome, rooffe and sides: and forasmuch as this is our case now, our formalities, and Government in the whole Hierarchy, is become a fretting Gangrene, a spreading Leprosie, an insupportable tyranny, up with it, up with it to the bottome, root and branch, hip and thigh, destroy these Amalekites, and let their place be no more found. I meane not the persons, but the pride, and power, and offices of the whole rabble.

3. By Story, 2 *King.* 2. 19. The men of *Iericho* complained of the bitternesse of their waters, which made the earth of that good land barren. What then may we say? Our land is good, our lot is fallen into a pleasant place: but oh the waters, the waters, the waters of the Sanctuary are or have been so bitter, that they have made our whole land in respect of the knowledge of the Lord, like a barren wildernesse! We have cried, and complained, and will not, ought not cease, till you have seasoned the fountaines, the heads, that so the springs may run cleare! This is the condition we doe and must pursue; In this we strive, we labour, we rest not, till our decayed palaces be repaired.

2. How are the spirits of these pursuers kept from sinking? By what meanes shall we beare up against all evident improbabilities, and dangerous difficulties that arise? I speake of such discouraging doubts, as may trouble the inward peace of intelligent observers. And in this we will looke both wayes, both on the difficulties, that may make us question, and on the helps that may make feasible, the Issue.

- \* 1. *The Grounds and particular discouragements, that make the Lords agents even despaire almost of seeing good.*

These doubts, or the ground of them, that make us conclude with the Church in Lamentations, not onely my strength, but even my hope is perished from the Lord, it is not possible, that we should ever see any good, I finde them (or at least so many of them as now I shall speake of) exemplified unto us in the words of *David*, *Psal.* 85. 1, 2, 3. For my endeavour now, as my practise alwayes, is to hold out nothing to you for instruction; but what the blessed word of truth, a perfect rule hath held out to me in observation: Particularly you may behold this experienced man of God, skilfull in soul-secrets, and of admirable acquaintance with Gods purposes, fastning his thoughts upon these foure things.

What prevalency in his time, or before, he had observed, his land, and people had had with God; for hereupon his thoughts and hopes would respectively rise, and fall. Now, saith he, I have good encouragements; for, Lord, thou hast been mercifull to thy Land; to give deliverance to us according to our desires is no new thing, we have had instances thereof. Now (Honourable, and beloved) that which was encouraging to *David*, is discouraging to many a humble spirit here. The not prevailing of Gods suppliants, many excellent ones for pietie and zeale, who all their dayes contesting against the drosse and rottenesse, which they observed to be either let in, or brought in, into the Lords house, did yet not live to see those dayes of peace and puritie, which we hope, at



least pursue to see. Our fathers, saith *David*, *Psal.* 22. 4. trusted in thee, they trusted in thee, and were delivered; our fathers, say we, men of eminency and age in Christ Jesus, prayed unto thee, they prayed unto thee and were not heard, in the thing they prayed unto thee for. In our younger times, and tender yeares, many of us have been acquainted with divers holy ones, whose continuall prayers, daily strivings, and heartie desires were to enjoy God in the puritie of his wayes, libertie of his ordinances and the like, yet they are all fallen asleepe, gone to their long homes, dyed in the mid way, before they arrived at the haven where they would have been. And are we better then they, that we should thinke to gaine that, of which they failed? Let me I pray you speake freely the thoughts of many a poore soule, who upon this very ground hath almost been plunged from doubting into despaire, Such and such a one, a godly Minister, an old disciple, a man aged in Christ did long since (as I now) desire to see Christs day, but could not see it, but having given a good testimony of their faith in him dyed, not having obtained the promise, *Heb.* 11. 39. It is possible then, nay more then probable, that I shall also come short of ever seeing this glory dwelling in our Land: This saying, these thoughts may be true, and though true, yet let no mans heart faile him. Oh sayest thou; How if I should dye, before I see peace upon Israel, comforts on England? Dye! what then? what then? Let not this thought deject any. But consider;

I. If thou shouldst, it is no prejudice to thy everlasting being, thou shalt not have one seat lower in heaven for it, *Heb.* 11. 16. The old Patriarches sought a countrey, but they came to their graves before they came to it, yet

yet God was not ashamed to be called their God, and even for them did he prepare a citie, a heaven, a place in Glory.

It is in the meane space, helpfull to thy spirituall being. These through the exercise of their faith, pursuing the fruition of a promise wrought righteousness, *vers.* 33. and so in some sort obtained the promise, the fruit of righteousness being holinesse, *Rom.* 6. the recompence of the Command, being the Command, say the Jews themselves.

Their stocke of prayers is going still; They that come of thee, *Isa.* 58. 12. that is, thy prayers, and humiliations, shall build the desolate places; true, in my own time, nay, thou shalt establish the foundations of a generation and a generation, not thy own age onely, but the next and the next shall fare the better, God remembering his mercy to a thousand generations of those that love him: This is one.

A second discouraging thought is, the weaknesse, dulnesse, and coldnesse of Christians now: Oh! men of parts they are prevalent. Could we call upon God, like *Samuel*, and *David*, or had we such as *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Iob*, to stand in the breach, there might be hope in England concerning this: But can the Lord listen to the prayers of a sinfull people, of men of small growth, and age in the wayes of God? even this Psalmist speaks of it, as a thing unusuall; Lord thou hast brought back the captivitie of *Iacob*. By the way note for the understanding of this, and severall other Scriptures, that the Church and people of God have severall titles, according to their condition, every appellation denoting a severall state: In their Infancy, and weake estate, they are called *Iacob*: In mansage, and strong growth *Israel*: *Ephraim* is a word that intimateth

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back-sliding, yet with an eye to returning, and *Isaac* (for once or twice the Church is called so) argueth temporall joy, and plentie, here *David* speaks of the Church, as a *Jacob*, an infant, and respectively looks upon delivery, as an extraordinary thing: And what are we? our walkings, our duties, our prayers, our Sabbaths, our graces, hearts, thoughts, tongue, every thing say, we are yet but babes, and can the Lord be mercifull to such? Had we lived in the dayes of such, or had we the hearts of such? what humilitie, what holinesse ruled then? what mortification, heavenly mindednesse shines in them? but with us it is not so, and will the Lord bring backe the captivitie of such poore soules! I deny not, this may discourage, but it should not, for the burnt offering of the Turtle was a favour of rest, as well as of the Oxe. Sinceritie, not degree, is that which pleaseth God; This is that spiced wine, and juice of the Pomegranate whereof Christ drinks. If our abilities be small, let us advance the freeness of Gods love the more; for *Jacob* shall be glad, as well as *Israel* rejoyce, *Psal.* 14. the last verse.

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The common sins of the time; I could never have looked for mercy, but that thou oh Lord hast forgiven the finnes of thy people, *vers.* 2. What peace can there be, whilest the iniquities of our Land, the oppressions of the righteous therein remaine, whilest Popery and prophanenesse, superstition and ignorance doe dwell among us: Sins certainly doe hinder good things from us, and our iniquities do divide betweene us and our God. But a praying people must stand in the gap, and God will be more ready to heare the cries of a praying people, then to revenge the transgressions of a sinning enemy. If the strength of sinne should

should be above the power of prayer, or if God should not withdraw displeasure from a sinfull people, never Land should taste of mercy, the portion of all would be Lamentations, mourning, and woe.

The Guilt of the sins of former ages; We might (saith a tender heart) possibly prevaile, were not our Land under the Guilt of some crying abominations. But how if the Lord remember against us former iniquities, to take vengeance on these times for the iniquitie of our forefathers; I have reason to hope well (saith *David*) for thou hast gathered up thy anger, that fury, the drops whereof were shed abroad upon this Land, thou hast removed, and as one appeased art fetled from thy displeasure, which the finnes of passed times provoked thee to, *vers.* 3. But can we hope so? oh, the *Marian* Blood, the Prelaticall rage, the countenancing of Popery, the introducing of Superstition, the wrongs offered to Gods children in all places, the molestation offered by us to the \*Scottish Nation, to stop them in their pursuit of puritie, and such like! have these been humbled for, repented? I dare not deny, this Honorable House hath done worthily, to call upon this whole Land, to lay to heart in these publike dayes, particularly the sins of Idolatry and Blood. And therefore I hope, our poore Land hath hope. But when on the other side, I behold the Lords resolution, Though I cleanse you, yet from Blood I will never cleanse you; That Land, every Land shall be waste, turned into desolation for the injuries done against the Lords Israel; I cannot but feare. Let me utter the secrets of my soule; God hath shewed many tokens for good, (which I shall anon mention) many men graciously instructed by the spirit of God, and of blessed experience in the thoughts of the Lord,

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\* Yet this Nation engage themselves to God against all hostilitie with England, in a solemne publike prayer, which also they make one of the reasons for sending assistance to our present necessities; This prayer see added at the end of this Sermon.

have from this place given comfortable assurances of good things to come, to whom I have fully assented, with this promise, that our Land lye not under the guilt of some old iniquitie; for I know, and have good warrant for it, that an approaching vengeance may be posted over, from age to age, from one generation to another, by the humble cries of the praying inhabitants. Now oh that we could be assured, that the Lord had nothing of an old score against us! But how should we know this? that which I have observed, let me make knowne; me thinks the Prophet *Isaiab, Chap. 65.* 16. speaking of the comming in of the Gentiles, and establishment of the Gospel, assures the Nations of the same, and that their former conditions whatsoever, should be no impediment, their standing out against God, opposition of his chosen should not hinder their ingrafting, and this worke they should sensibly apprehend by two evidences, which I now apply to our selves, that we also, even we may know, whether our Lands former iniquities be hid from Gods eyes or no.

- I. When a people are wholly given to advance God the Creator, and disesteeme the creature; when we comfort our selves in the Lord our God, when we keepe up our spirits, from the view of God, and his attributes, his promises, and his faithfulness in them; when we observe the people generally saying, Salvation is of the Lord; when the name, power, and providence of God growes into request, and the strongest probabilities are looked upon, as nothing out of him, then lift we up our hearts, and looke, God is bringing neere his mercy which shall not linger, neither shall his salvation stay long, but he will put it in Sion, for Israel his glory. What? yea even now. When he that blesteth himselfe, promiseth a blessing to himselfe,  
growes

growes confident of a good issue ; when he ( I say ) shall blesse himselfe in the God of truth , grounds his confidence upon God alone, and his truth, then stand still and see the salvation of God.

When the spirits of men hanker after the puritie of Gods wayes, grow weary of that aieri nourishment, wherewith they have been fed; when they loath superstition and formalitie, toying, and trifling in Gods Service ; when he that sweareth, ( by swearing understand all the parts of Gods worship ) comes before God in any of his ordinances, shall sweare by the God of truth, shall desire, that that service may be performed according to the truth, and puritie of God, then, it may be, the Lords hand is neere to be revealed to a Land for Good. Let such as are wise, understand these things ; Let them that are prudent, know them ; Let such as have experience, and skill to study men, in their relation to God, Let all that are judicious to know times, and the conditions of them, view our land, and what the people are, view our land, and what our dependance is, view our land, and whither our affections incline : for when he that blesseth himselfe, shall blesse himselfe in the God of truth, and when he that sweareth, and serveth God, desires to do so, in the God of truth, then all former troubles, and the causers of them, sins, shall be forgotten, they shall be hid from Gods eyes. Hitherto the doubts.

\* 2. *The props, and particular incouragements for pursuing a desired happinesse.*

Suppose then, that all these things are against us, and that the imprevalency of predeceffours, the weaknesse of our helpers, the sins of our persons, and Land, and the guilt of former iniquities, doe all with one consent

consent testifye against us also, yet there is a fountaine notwithstanding all this, Gods children yet may obtaine excellent things of God, for his names sake; And if we minde the Scripture, we shall finde God arguing from three of his own attributes, and thence inferring conclusions of comforts; His Glory, his Truth, his Mercy: These the Scripture oft makes use of, and propounds as precious Cordials: as for example, *Psal. 85. 9. 10.* The promise asserted is, Surely his salvation is nigh to those that feare him: beleve this, first Gods glory is ingaged in it: That Glory may dwell in our Land: and not that only; By this meanes mercy, and truth in the promise and performance are met together. So *Isa. 42. 21.* The Lord is well pleased for his righteous mercies sake; He will magnifie the law, that is, his truth in his word, and so make himselfe honourable in the eyes of all men. But in *Exod. 6. 2.* he reiterates his argument, but still upon one ground, *viz.* the evidencing of these three.

He encourageth *Moses* to goe about that great message, of fetching Israel from Egypt. And thus he argues.

1. Thou shalt be an instrument of good for me, it will belong to me to protect thee; I am Iehovah: there is my glory more clearely in this act evidenced then ever heretofore to *Abraham*, or the other Patriarches.

2. And I established my Covenant with them, to give them the land of their sojournings, I must make it good, I cannot faile of my word, this is my truth, *vers. 4.*

3. And I also have heard their cry, their oppressions, their sighes, and this is my mercy. My bowels yerne towards them.

Hee bids *Moses* evidence these to the people, and

Albelda.

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and by them encline their spirits.

1. Say, I am Jehovah, I will bring you from your burdens, & deliver you from that bondage; this is mercy.

2. I will take you to me for a people, and I will be your God, so shall you know, that I am Jehovah; this is Glory.

3. And I will also bring you into a land, which I sware to your fathers to give you, &c. this is truth.

Let these be remembered, these are (I assure you) strong supporters, such ejaculations become Christians, Oh Lord, our sins testifie to our face our unworthinesse of good, but we expect them for thy glory, truth, and mercy sake. If thy Glory may dwell in our consciences, if thy truth may be cleare to our apprehensions; if thy mercy may be seene of our people, then glad thou our hearts, &c. Though nothing in us, yet these in God will uphold, though our redemption be not nigh, even all the while, that we have occasion to sigh out these words: *The Harvest is past, the Summer is ended, and we are not saved.*

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C H A P. IIII.

*shewing the first use of the point, which is of Contestation.*

**I**F these things be so, that Gods people are oft long in the pursuit, and held off from the fruition of their soules desires, that many Harvests doe passe, and many Summers are ended, and yet they not saved: Then hereupon we have just ground of Contestation,





*Haman.* In three particulars, have the enemies of truth removed our happineffe from our fruition, to a very great distance.

1. *In the corruption of Gods wayes.*
2. *In the destruction of Gods Agents.*
3. *In the disturbance of our Kingdome.*

1. *In the corruption of Gods waies.*

These enemies of God and truth endeavoured the hurt of us in our most precious things, and as if they had intended to thrust us under the displeasure of the Almighty, they mingled that which should be our appointed food, with gall, and venome; they became children, that were corrupters, *Isa. 1. 4.* They had banished puritie, and in its roome introduced foolerie; cheating us of our bread, they gave us a stone; taking from us the weightie things of the law, they left us the shell: They had driven the exercise of the gift of Prayer quite from our Church, and Preaching was in a faire way to bee thrust after it; and in roome of both gave us nothing, or that indeed which was worfe then nothing. A horrible sinne equalized by God himselfe to murder: He that shall kill that in his Tent, which should be slain at the doore of the Tabernacle, hath shed blood, blood shall be imputed to him: *Levit. 17. 4.* God is the same, the worship is more precious, and of it is God more jealous; the corrupters sinne cannot be lesse: But of this removed mercy by this corruption of Gods worship note two things: First, the nature of the sinne. Secondly, the meanes of its introduction.

First, the nature of this sinne, so forced upon us of late, is lively represented to us in the acts of *Elies*

sonnes, 1 Sam. 2. whose wickednesse points out this parallel in these particulars.

1. It is of a growing nature, it will spread, if not withstood; They were to have such a piece, by Gods appointment; but they would strike their flesh-hooke in at adventure, and after that they would choose their piece; thus became the sinne of the young men great: And theirs then is not small, who first in circumstances, then in substances; first in formes, then in doctrine had opened a wide gappe for Religion to be gone.

2. They (whatsoever was the pretence) minded themselves, not God, they would be served before him; even before they burnt the fat, the Priests boy came. And in truth, I thinke it no very difficult thing to raise beliefe in all, that howsoever reverence in Gods service was the pretence; yet the settling of themselves, the establishing of their greatnesse, Ambition, Pride, Tyrannie was the maine.

3. By these their doings, they brought the Ordinances of God into contempt, *vers.* 17. men abhorred the offering of the Lord. And what esteeme others brought to the offerings of God, will be seene, if appeale be made to the consciences of such, as chose rather to flye, to die, then to be partakers with them in their follies.

4. And for themselves, they grew prodigiouly prophane, either in actuall naughtinesse, as *vers.* 22. If that be so to be taken; or else very Atheists, regardlessse of their places, and duties, causing the women to lye all night at the doore of the Temple, before they could have their sacrifices offered. And for our sonnes of *Eli*, as of their pious, and blamelesse behaviours, there is no large reports; so of their carelesnesse in their

their Offices, their Pulpits, and Churches are sufficient testimonies. This is the nature of the sinne.

2. But for the meanes of its introduction, and how they went about to establish these vanities, that is the thing; whether they traced the politique rules of any wily, and wicked Jesuit, I cannot say, nor gaine-say; this I can: That if they set *Ieroboam* before them, as a marke to walke by, I never observed a more exact imitation. I desire, as others have done, something to discover the subtiltie, that we might the more abhorre the sinne; suppose then, that one were in a secret kinde of way to bring in Romish Idolatry into this Land, surely setting *Ieroboam* and his courses 1 Kin. 12. 31. before his eyes, he could walke but thus.

First, *Ieroboam* desired not to turn all the Temples, and Synagogues in his dominions into high places for his Idols: No, he would onely have one place; he built a house of high places, one satisfied him: Neither did his followers so much as desire, that the Idoll Masse, or Romish service should have free passage in all places at first; or that this Gangrene should overspread the face of the Land in one yeere: He is content, if one, one alone be this *Harvest*, or this *Summer* set apart for such an use.

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Secondly, *Ieroboam* admitted of the ends, the basest of the people to be made Priests; none so meane, but good enough to be a sacrificer to his Idol. And what kinde of Priests have of late beene admitted most usually, our Land to its woe doth feele. A Generation of prophets are they, whom their Masters thought fittest to serve their owne ends, in their Preachings, Printings, and Practises; aiming at nothing, but that these great Arch-priests might beare rule by their meanes. These are the men that have made these de-

solations in our Kingdome : Borne for no other ends, but to flatter greatnesse, and to feed themselves : Their number, their qualities, their carriages : Their spitefull words, malignant plots, and venomous behaviours ; the Committee for scandalous Ministers, the places of their confinement about the Citie, and the other Army can best testifie : Nay, (if report lye not) some of the modester, and wiser Officers on the contrary side, have expressed a detestation of the base Clergie, that hang upon them, and not without cause ; They equalizing, if not exceeding the worst of the common souldiers in rudenesse, incivility, rage, and irreligion.

Thirdly, *Ieroboam* would not, no, he would not meddle with the substance of Religion, not he; onely, some circumstances, he thought not so decent, as he himselfe could order them ; the time of their solemn Feasts fell not out at a convenient season, or else they had not festivals enough, by divine institution ; he must have one Holy day more, one festivall more, a selemne Feast in the eight moneth, he thought might much advance devotion; but it was in a moneth, which he had feigned \* out of his owne heart, \* and that superfluously beyond either warrant, or need \* : Ours have dealt even so ; they are Protestants, they, you must not suspect them ; Popery they detest, as much as any reformers in the Land : But onely they would have some more reverence in the outward worship of God : The reformed Religion in its solemnities was too naked, too plaine : The Communion Table stood like a kitchin dresser-board, it must be advanced to the upper end, that none might sit above God Almighty. It must be railed in ; it must have some respect shewed to it: Holy daies, the Saints Festivals must be kept with  
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\* כתב מלכו

some strictnesse; and in lieu of them, you shall have liberty on the Lords dayes to play, game, and revell; and to do what you please: this superfluous devotion opened a wide in-let to Popery; and by prevailing in this, they gained many points in the Compasse of their intentions.

Fourthly, *Ieroboam* would put no more upon others, nor exact more from others, then he would doe himselfe: He offered, saith the Text: And the most forward in submitting to, and acting of, these forementioned devises, were those reverend Sages of our Land, who by their prostituted gravities to these imposed vanities endeavoured to get respect.

Fifthly, *Ieroboam* above all places, had a watchfull eye to those Congregations, that were the eyes of the Kingdome; carefully heeding that no Priests, but those of his own consecrating should be settled there; he placed in *Bethel*, the Priests of the high places, which he had made; that Town above all must be provided for by them, to prove an imitation of this mischievous patterne with us; the evidence is ready; into some small livings in Countrey villages, perhaps a man of paines and piety might be admitted: But what kinde of men were ordinarily seated in our Cathedrals? in a great part of late become the nest of idle drones, and the roosting place of superstitious formalists: yea, some of them made the shelter of such insufficients, that had not great friends, and a full purse become preventives, they might have beene ranked, without wrong to them, in the forme with the lowest of the people. But how was this honorable and famous Citie of *London* furnished? even just as *Ieroboam* furnished *Bethel*, with the worst, the idlest, the most superstitious of all the rest. If the particulars, that here  
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since this renowned Parliament have either for their Popishnesse, and vitiousnesse been expelled, and censured; or that out of selfe guiltinesse, for feare have fled, or resigned; together with some others, that as yet lye hid unmedled with, or but now in agitation, were recorded; the number would be considerable; this I heard reckoned, that in one street, not one Minister in seven or eight Churches immediately adjoyning, was able to stand Parliament prooffe. A piece of hellish policy, thus to darken the Eye: for if the eye be darke, how great is that darknesse? the body can have no light.

Sixthly, and lastly, to make all passe the more smoothly, The people, they must be Courted, they must be pleased, they must have some favour shewne, to winne them to swallow downe insensibly this accursed devise: *Ieroboam* made a feast to the people, that so he might ingratiate himselfe with them: And our good people must not be restrained; Libertie for recreations must be granted; A booke of Sports published, to make them conceiye themselves happy, as living under such carefull Pastors: for if they tooke care for their playes, and sports, surely, they would much more take care for their liberties and persons: and most of all for their soules, and consciences. Thus have we seene *Israels Ierobam*, and *Englands Prelates* so alike in their aimes, and waies, their designes, and courses, that I can see no wrong done them, if, as the Scripture to this day of him, so even to the last day of them, it may, whensoever they are mentioned; be said, and adjoyned as a justly deserved, and therefore an undivided title: *The Prelates, that made England so sinne.*

*In the destruction of Gods Agents.*

The first particular, wherein our malicious enemies have set our salvation from us at a great distance, being past; The second follows; They made our salvation remote also, in the destruction of Gods agents, the righteous of the people, who are the blessings of the land; The righteous man is the *prop of the world*, ימור עולם, *saith Salomon, Prov. 10. 25.* Salvation, *saith Isai. Chap. 26. 1, 2.* will God appoint for walls, and bulwarks: How may this be? why, open the gates, that the righteous nation, that keepeth the truth, may enter in: yet these pretious ones, of whom the world is not worthy, by these sonnes of Belial, were held not worthy of the world, or any part therein, earth, and aire, and such common comforts the interests of all living was denied them: Their practise, and malice this way is too apparent, it need not stay us, and their damnation sleepest not, it will not stay long. God, and his just judgements shall hunt these evill men to destruction; A consumption decreed against them shall overflow with righteousnesse justly proportionable to every eye, against such will God awake to the judgement, that he hath commanded, and bring upon them, that which he hath written. Nay, let me speake an admirable thing, to these terrible ones, and that no more then what the mouth of the Lord hath spoken, that when their insatiable ambition hath put them upon all furious wayes, so that they shall by strength, and force strive to prevent their fall: yet this their doome abides them, they shall never have the honour to die a souldiers death; They shall die with the mightie, that fall, and goe downe to hell or the grave, by weapons of warre with their swords under their heads,

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they shall not die fighting valiantly in battell; but how then? I desire the words may be minded both in their death, and cause. For their death, it shall be ignominious and base, Their iniquitie shall be upon their bones, for some capitall crime they shall die by the hand of the executioner, and for the cause, this is all, because they have been the terrour of the mightie in the land of the living, *Ezek. 32. 26, 27.* What are these things so? &c.

3. *In the disturbance of the Kingdome.*

They have thirdly, and lastly, removed our saluation from us in the disturbance of the Kingdome; By reason of our present troubles, we are farre from peace, some have lost their lives, some their liberties, some of us our estates, all of us our securitie, many a childe hath lost a father that should have bred him, his happinesse is farre distant, many a man his limbes, his health is as farre: In one countrey the fruits of the earth are spoiled, in another townes consumed, death and desolation hath all. Two wayes onely are left in which we pursue our desired ends, composition, and conquest, the one is shut against us by the feares of an open enemy, the other by the falsenesse of an hidden friend, and why should I not still complaine? so that if any say, Why cry you out of violence and wrong? we reply, Is there not a cause? you have stolne away our King, how is it then that you say, What aileth thee?

<sup>a</sup> 2. *The second act of wickednesse, retarding our pursuit.*

3. Secondly, We contest against the foresaid enemy and evill man for dulling and damping, clogging and retarding us in the pursuit of this too far distant saluation,

tion; and this he doth by a threefold engine.

1. By corrupting the judgements of some; all is not gold that glisters, nor all right, that appeare on the right side. And such as deale wickedly with the Covenant, may easily be corrupted with flatteries, for the people onely that know the Lord shal be valiant, faithfull, and doe exploits, *Dan. 11. 32.* The unsound are quickly seduced, and men of weake understandings much puzzled with the specious name of a King, and strange misapplication of some Scriptures, as if they had been particularly written for England.

2. By disheartning the resolves of others, strengthening their owne parties, by all the wayes they possibly can finde out, both false, and feigned; one while a ferious Protestation shall put a faire face upon the design, another while a weekly *Mercurius* shall magnifie with hispen, some small exploit of the Pike, or none; nay that which is worst of all, Gods most reverend name is called to attest to mans device, dayes of praise are celebrated, and solemne meetings appointed, and kept for mercies never received, for victories never gained, for discovery, and prevention of treasons plotted, and prevented in one and the same imagination, a vice the Church of old laid to heart, Oh faith she, this cuts me, they make a noise, (marke her phrase) make a noise, ( she gives it no better a title,) in the house of God, as in the day of a solemne Assembly, *Lam. 2. 7.*

By hindering the practises of all, by severall corrupt courses, not voting right, or betraying the trust committed to them by discovering intentions, flugging designs, by secret compliances, starting impediments; twentie, and twise twentie, are the sinfull devices of the men of this generation to crosse, and confound the working zeale of publique spirits.

## Sect. 2.

*Against our sadden selves.*

**I**N the next place we contest against our selves and sadnesse; Oh! say we, we looked for peace, but behold trouble, for comforts, but behold calamitie, our strength and hopes are even perished from the Lord: thus are our hearts cast down, within us. But why art thou cast down, oh dejected heart? and why is thy soul troubled within thee? for marke,

1. Thou canst not, for all thy great troubles, I say, thou canst not say, as they in the cause of Israel, God hath continued in his displeasure these 70 yeeres, *Zech. 1. 12.* nay, nor 70 moneths, nay, nor 70 weekes, few, though very evill, have the dayes of our distresses been, neither have we attained to the age, and duration of our fathers troubles.

2. God hath laid down a principle, on which his people may stay themselves, and rest. That he will not strive for ever, neither will he be wroth continually, *Isa. 57. 16.* He will not be wroth to victory, the word imports so, God will not be angry to such a high degree, as that his wrath shall get the upper hand: for two things alwayes stand up against his displeasure, neither shall it subdure them; to wit, his attribute of mercy, and his childrens prayer: of the former speaks the Apostle, *1am. 2. 13.* Mercy rejoyceth against judgement; of the latter speaks *Hosea, Chap. 11. ult. Iudah* yet rules with God, that is, by the power of prayer.

3. He hath ascertained us, that the troubles, and trials, which he sends, or suffers, shall be according to our abilities and graces: for God is a God of judgement, of our creatures, the Husbandman proportions

tions his tooles and instruments to his worke, for his God instructs him \* to that discretion, in that Art so to doe: how much more the God of discretion himselfe shall apply fit Instruments of instruction, both in kinde, and degree, to his childrens strength, and qualities? The truth whereof we have notably exemplified to us in the story of the three Patriarches, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, thus: *Egypt* was a place of great service, fore bondage, and hard measure for all of the Lords people, that went thither; now observe: There was a famine in *Abrahams* dayes, there was a famine in *Isaacs* dayes, and there was a famine in *Jacobs* dayes; to support these his servants under this pinching calamitie, God provides for them all, and gives direction to them all, but the one point-blanke contrary to the other. To *Abraham* under famine, he gives leave to take his owne course, so *Abraham* went downe into *Egypt*, to sojourn there, *Gen. 12. 10.* To *Isaac* God appeares with an expresse prohibition, Though famine be upon thee, goe not downe into *Egypt*, but abide in this land, *Gen. 26. 2.* To *Jacob* in the same condition God appeares in like manner with an expresse command, Feare not to goe down to *Egypt*, *Gen. 46. 3.* The reason of this diversitie is to be drawne from their persons, thus: *Abraham* is the Type, and instance of a spiritualized soule, carried up in his apprehensions, and by the evidencing act of faith enjoying a very sensible, and full communion with God. Now all the Creatures, and the many varieties here, are far below such a one; he like the upper Region of the Aire, enjoying a comfortable calmeneffe of conscience, an inward blessed peace in his neer nesse to, and contemplation of his God, not stirred at all, though the lower Regions be sometimes quiet, sometimes cloudy; now

shaken with tempests, stormes, and thunder; then againe refreshed with the bright, and warme gleames of a shining Sunne, &c. This is *Abraham*, the heavenly union he enjoyed with God in soule, made him look upon the whole world, and the changes therein, as toies: God therefore takes no notice, whither *Abraham* goes, he hath a spirit, transcendent to all, even Egyptian trials; let him either goe thither, or stay here, all conditions are alike to him, because his soule is stayed on thee. Againe, *Isaac* is a Type, and a pattern of a true, yet an ordinary Saint, his converse was much with the things of the world, and busineses of his temporall calling; in which by the fiduciary act of faith, he dependingly beheld God in his promises, and wisely observed severall acts of providence in his outward affaires: On him came a famine too, then in a vision speakes God to this effect. *Isaac*, that all sorts of professors in Ages to come, may have their conditions exemplified in this perfect rule of righteousness, the Scripture, I have not, as to thy father, bestowed such a beatificall vision of eternall blisse on thee, as whereby thou mayest trample the whole creature under thy feete: Goe not therefore, for thy reliefe downe to *Egypt*, of all places take heed of that; *Egypt* is a place of sore troubles, thou hast not graces able to encounter with those sad oppositions, that that Land will send against thee; and therefore because thou hast not strength of heart, for Egyptian trials, abide in this Land, here are trials suitable to thy strength, and here will I provide for thee. Lastly, *Jacob* is a Type and patterne of a patient, strong, and suffering Saint, armed with abilities to undergo, whatsoever Gods trying wisdom, mans opposing malice, or Satans invisible depths could forge against, or inflict

fiect upon him. *Iacob*, saith God, Go thou downe to *Egypt*, for though the *Egyptians* shall there shew thee hard things, yet I have given thee shoulders of brasse, and sides of Iron, armed thy spirit with courage, resolution, and undauntednesse; I have set thee up as a token for good, to such as shall come after, when they shall see, how I upheld thee with a strong hand under troubles, and freed thee with a high hand from trouble; and how thou glorifiedst me in the very fire, and by suffering, and dying didst conquer and kill thy very oppressors. Behold the wisdom and goodnesse of God.

4. God speaks expressly against such distempers, and thereupon the children of God have contested against such heavy dejectednesse in themselves; My soule, why art thou cast downe, and why art thou disquieted within me? for the Word of God is as effectually, as an act of man, when he speaks with a strong hand, *Isa. 8. 11.* a phrase improper, the hand is the Instrument of action, not speech; yet the efficacy of Gods speech is thereby shewne forth. He speaks strongly to his Saints, Feare not; and to their hearts, Be not dismayed: and this word should kill a thousand affrighting imaginations, as *Samsons* Jaw-bone did men.

*Object.* If I heard God speaking so to my particular, I might indeed be either raised from, or armed against doubts and feares; I would up, and be doing. *Sol.* Hear him speake! Why, he doth speake now, as much as ever he was used to speake: I mean to private Christians in an ordinary way: For I meddle not now with those extraordinary apparitions, or voyces, whereby God did reveale extraordinary things to extraordinary

traordinary men: for ordinarily then, and now, God speakes three waies unto his children.

First, in Prayer, as he did to *Hannah*, who seeking God in that Ordinance for a childe, had such an inter-nall answer revealed to her soule, which did so assure her of successe, that rising from prayer, she looked no more sad: many such answers, Gods praying suppliant have experience of at this day.

Secondly, in ensuring occurrents: I meane thus, some accidents doe come to passe, not for themselves alone, (the consequences of them being of no great weight) but to uphold the hearts of men cald forth to imployment, and to assure them from such, and such experiences, of a continued divine assistance in any and every necessitie: The Scripture gives us two instances of this, (and if you wil beleieve my \* Author; but two) The one in *David*, who during his Shepherds life met with a Lion, and eke a Beare seizing on his sheepe: *David* extraordinarily inlived, fought with both; kild both, and preserved his flock: here were many things extraordinary; courage, strength, successe; and what is the issue of all? the preservation of a sheepe; or a lambe, or two: Can we thinke, that God should send thus from heaven to save *David* from those, that would swallow him up, and that onely to save a lambe, or sheep from the payes of the Lion, and the Beare? No, it was an ensuring occurrent to satisfie *David*, that he might look for aid in case of Danger; and to this use *David* improved it in his fight against *Goliath*. Againe, *Esther* is by an extraordinarie act of providence advanced to be Queene: Was this for no other end, but the preferment of one single maiden? No, *Mordecai* knew, and so he told her,

Her

<sup>a</sup> *Abelda.*

Her preferment was but an evidencing act, that she was come to that place for some speciall service, and so it proved she was. Now (me thinkes) when I see in these our dayes so many providentiall acts, serving one another, and that without any proportionable issue, as yet we can see, I cannot but ranke them in the number of them which here I call ensuing occurrents. Such as these; *Scotland* satisfied in their pursuit: This Parliament beyond expectation gathered; beyond example continued; so many hellish designs discovered; and the mischief of them prevented: yea, turned upon them, in whom they first bred: such a praying spirit in all hearts, so many dayes of prayer, publike, private: such respect to the best both men, and Ministers: such Covenants, Protestations, Oathes; this present now in agitation for the union of the Kingdomes; such laying to heart our cause in *France*, *Low Countries*, and other reformed Churches: such brotherly, and tender affections, and expressions in *Scotland*; and (which is not the least) the Assembly called, and sitting, Reformation going on, the Citie of God erecting, even in a troublesome time, as *Daniel* foretold it should; *Inter arma Academias fundare*: to thinke on the building of Schooles, establisshing Lectures, setting a Ministry, when the Kingdome shakes with feares and miseries; was once made the propertie of *Holland*; but goe we on, as we doe, our Land, our Parliament in that noble worke shall have their share.

Thirdly, in accidentall passages, God sometimes by words casually spoken, without any intention in the speaker, may sometime appeare in that word to the apprehensions of his people. Dreaming, and telling a



dreame to ones bedfellow, and neighbour, what more ordinary? yet *Gedeon* from ſuch a relation obſerved a Divine providence, and an answer from the Almighty: The brute creature may ſometimes be the meſſage-bringer of ſuch tydings, as God is pleaſed to communicate. Aſke the Beaſts and they ſhall teach thee, the Fowles ſhall declare it, *Iob* 12. 7. And God teacheth us from the beaſts of the field, *Iob* 35. 11. But a more Notable ſtory, was never met with, as cleerely evidencing Gods voyce, in acts meerly accidentall, then this which I ſhall now produce; in heathen ſtories many paſſages to this purpoſe are extant, but this ſurmounts them all. When *Haman* had plotted that unexampled deſtruction againſt the *Jewes*; of which we reade in the Booke of *Eſther*; *Mordecai* a man of a publique ſpirit, that loved his Nation, put himſelfe upon that noble worke of croſſing *Hamans* deſigne, and preventing the extirpation of the *Jewes* his Country-men: In this his endeavour, among other thoughts (for the ſtory hath ſome other particulars,) three diſcouraging objections preſented themſelves to his imaginations.

Fiſt, certainly *Haman* being a great Favourite, and potent with the King, would upon his fiſt motion procure the Decree to paſſe, and as ſuddenly effect the determined execution, that he ſhould have no time (doe what he could) to worke his Country-mens ſalvation in that earth.

Secondly, affuredly *Haman* a great politician, and an old Courtier, having many followers, had laid his Plot ſo deepe, ſo ſure; had ſo combined with friends, and eſta bliſhed his worke with the beſt counſels, that the utmoſt of his poore, and private endeavours could  
never

never either to the bottome discover, or in all the parts of it untie the knot of this matchlesse Conspiracie.

Thirdly, and when upon such distressefull thoughts, some secret injections of Gods power, and goodnesse, of his ancient dealings, and his fore-fathers experience of wonderfull deliveries in the dayes of *Abraham, Iacob, Moses, &c.* did offer themselves: His wretched distrustfull heart replyed; True, in those yeeres of ancient times, God did shew visible evidences of his wonderfull providence: But it is not so now, we see no such thing. These were this good mans temptations, with which being mightily dejected, and in a pensive manner in the evening returning to his house, he met three children coming from Schoole: *Mordecai* understanding by them where they had beene, inquired of one of them, where his lesson had beene that day; Sir, replied the childe, in the *Proverbs, Cap. 3. vers. 25.* Be not afraid of any sudden fear, nor of the desolation of the wicked, when it shall come. *Mordecai* amazed cryed out, The voyce of God in the lesson of this childe; I am confident this desolation shall not be so speedy. The second childe upon *Mordecaies* demand, told him, that he had learned that day, *Isa. 8. 10.* Take counsell together, it shall be brought to nought, pronounce a Decree, it shall not stand, for God is with us; Oh the wonderfull goodnesse of God (said *Mordecai*) that thus out of the mouthes of babes and sucklings ordaines strength for his poor servant! I shall, I am sure, I shall search after all their depths, & discover; yea, and prevent them. And what hath this third childe got at Schoole to day? one verse also, said the childe, to wit, *Isa. 46. 4.* Even unto old age I am the God, and unto gray haire I will beare

you; I have made you, and I will carry you, I will bear you, and I will deliver you. Now blessed be God (cried *Mordecai*) that hath not left his servant comfortlesse; but even in these ordinary weake meanes speakes admirable things to his Instruments; God will yet be mercifull unto his people, and will yet choose *Sion* an habitation to dwell in; the Evidences of his hand now shall not be inferiour to those of former times: And cheerfully raised in his spirit with this divine assurance, though in an accidentall passage, he went to his house confidently, and full of joy. This story thus and more largely recorded by the *Rabbine*, I finde no mention of in Scripture; yet this I finde, *Esther* 4. 7. that *Mordecai* told *Esthers* messenger all that which had happened unto him, and nothing is here recorded, that did happen unto him, besides what in particular he mentions; and if I should say, It was this strange accident, as on the one side, it is not impossible, but it may be so: so on the other I have no better ground then the report of this Jewish Doctor, to affirme it. The like instances might be given perhaps neerer home: the thing I would teach hereby is, that men should be wise and warie even in such accidentall occurrents to note Gods voyce for their owne good, that we may furnish our selves with all helps, that may hold up our sinking hearts, and cause us to offer our selves willingly to the worke of the Lord.

*Rabbi Moses  
Almosneim  
in libro  
י'י משה*

CHAP. V.

Containing the second use of the point, which is  
of Exhortation.

(This use, because the time was spent, was wholly  
omitted at the time of the delivery.)

**F**urthermore, if it be so, that we may be long held from the fruition of what we long for, labour for; Then let me with earnestnesse, and zeale exhort you, that though Harvest be past, and Summer ended, and we not sated; Yet move still, pursue still, lose not the reward of the pains you have took, in due time you shall reape if you faint not. Tis the earth, and earthly men, that sit still in dulnesse, but your worke is heavenly, your aimes for heaven; yea, and your agents deale with heaven too. Tis *Gallio*, *Acts. 18.* that cares not, how things goe; tis onely *Reuben* among the Tribes, whose dignitie was gone, that in the dayes of publique troubles abode among the sheepfolds to heare the bleating of the sheepe: But your dignitie is still up, your reputation still holds in the hearts of all the faithfull in the Land: let none stay therefore at home, and be the last with the posteritie of *Adonikam* that move forward to the worke of the Lord. God is about to make unto this Land a feast of fat things, *Isa. 25. 6.* Therefore

Sect. 1.

*Be you disposed to Go.*

**L**et none refuse to come to the Supper of the Lord being invited, to help forward the Lords worke,  
H 3 being

being excited : Conſider, If you gaine the end of your endeavours, and come to your deſired haven ; If you eſta bliſh by holding out a little longer, the worke of the Lord, that is to be done in theſe latter dayes ; If God honour you to be but a finger of the fiſt Angel, to ſhed abroad ſome drops of fury out of the vials of Gods vengeance upon the ſeat of the Beaſt, that ſo his kingdome may grow darke from that Scripture, *Iſa. 25. 7.* you ſhall procure to us thereby three great benefits.

1. Ignorance ſhall be remedied ; By you the Lord ſhall remove the covering, that covers the face of all people in this mountaine, in this land ; The more Poverty, the more darkneſſe ; the more reformation, the more light : Help to fulfill the Prophecies that goe before ; how that about the evening of the world it ſhall be light, abundance of knowledge ſhall be in thoſe dayes ; Knowledge ſhall cover the earth, as waters the Sea : and bleſſed is the man, that helps the Lord in the worke that he hath purpoſed.

2. Perſecution ſhall ceaſe. The Lord ſhall then ſwallow up death, violent death, and deadly uſages of his. There ſhall be no hurting, nor deſtroying in all Gods holy mountaine ; Make our Land but the mountaine of the Lord, all teares ſhall be wiped from our eyes. Great ſhall be the peace of our children.

3. All diſreſpect of the wayes of truth, and reproach of the profeſſours thereof ſhall vaniſh, from the face of all the Land ; the Lord ſhall remove the rebukes of his people ; In ſtead of deriſions, and ſlanders, nothing ſhall be heard in all the Kingdome, but, Come we will goe with you to the Houſe of the Lord. This is your Gaine, (and can their be a greater ? ) Ignorance, violence and reproach ſhall flye away, like the miſts before the wind ; Knowledge, encouragements, and reſpects

spects shall succeed in their roomes , Oh who shall live when God shall do this !

Se&t. 2.

*Nay, goe on as you doe.*

**B**E not disheartned, ride on prosperously in this way of truth and righteousnesse, and the Lord stand with the right : Goe on I say, but Go on in the strength and power of the Lord your God.

1. God will put a Character of honour upon his agents, that have been instruments of publique good, as upon *Noah*, *Gen. 5. 29.* His name was Consolation and rest, because by him God comforted his people in their endeavours, against all pressures put upon them by earthly men, whom God hath cursed; and upon *Naaman*, he was an honourable man, *2 King. 5. 1.* a man of respect, and name, because by him God had given deliverance to *Aram*: you are the Lands *Noah* to comfort them, the *Naaman* to deliver them, and then that shall be said of, and done to you, which shall be said, and done to the man, whom God will honour: And very remarkable is it, that in that great employment of *Moses* and *Aaron* to *Pharaoh*, for the Churches good, God in mentioning of it mentions them, and mentions them not, but with epithets of honour, and titles of renowne, *Exod. 6. vers. 26, 27.* This is that *Moses*, and *Aaron*! and againe, This is that *Moses*, and *Aaron*! which character is put upon them in a double respect: 1. Because God employed them for his Churches good, This is that *Moses* and *Aaron* to whom God said, Bring my people from Egypt. 2. For their courageous, and bold discharge of this employment even to, and against the King himselfe. They said to *Pharaoh*, King of Egypt, that he should dismiss Israel, to  
*Pharaoh,*

*Pharash*, a cruell man, to a King of Egypt a Potent Prince, yet they feared not. This is that *Moses* and \* So *Abarbi*. *Asson* \*. And the same shall be your honour, and joy; *nel.* This is the Parliament that God hath imployed for Englands good, and they discharged that trust with faithfulness, and courage even with the King himselfe, This is that Parliament.

2. And that shall be your Consolation, for that shall be no comfort, no confidence to the house of Israel, that brings their sin to remembrance, *Ezek. 29. 16.* But that shall be the contentment of soul to them, that brings their zeale for God to remembrance; Beleeve me, I speake assuredly, it shall be no griefe of heart to any to have helped forward the cause of the Lord Jesus. Take God therefore with you;

2. In the use of his ordinances. Prayer will consume out the adversaries of the Lord, and his Land, and though not all at once, yet it will worne them out by little and little, till they be consumed. God is said, *Isa. 31. 9.* to have his fire in Sion, and his furnace in Jerusalem; These are places of his worship, and his Saints meetings, their prayers there are the Lords fire, and furnace, by which he burnes up the enemies of his Church, and wayes.

2. In dependance on his power: all successe is from him; when we know not, what to do, let our eyes be towards God: Promotion, saith the Psalmist, comes not from the East, West, or South, *Psal. 75. 6.* Why is not the North also excluded? it signifies the hidden place \*, and thereby would teach, that all promotions, comforts, blessings doe come from the hidden place, the invisible hand of Gods blessing, and providence.

צפון \*

## Sect. 3.

*A Caution not to rest on the worke.*

3.  
L Astly, I close this point with this cautionary word, Grant it, and suppose that God honour you thus, to be the noble instruments to establish his worship in the puritie, the peace, and liberties of our land, & to do all other things, for which the eyes of the Kingdom are upon you; yet be advised, get better grounds to erect the hopes of your everlasting being upon. Not externall mercies, were they ten times more multiplied, but Jesus Christ hath place there. Marke that notable place, *Amos 9.7.* wherein God sharply charges the men of Israel; You are all as the children of Æthiopia unto me, oh you sons of Israel, I put no difference between you, and them; No, say they; (for their reply is secretly implied) thou hast shovne thy love unto us severall waies, thou hast wrought a great deliverance in our Land, thou broughtst us from Egypt; What? is that all you have to plead? I confesse, I did bring the children of Israel from Egypt, but (marke it) So I did the Philistines from Caphthor, and the Syrians from Kir. They therefore may plead an interest in me, as well as you, for oft all outward things come alike to all; I would not have you erect your hopes of eternall life upon this, because God hath made you instruments of good, for though it be an honour, a mercy, yet but a common mercy: and againe, I would not have you cast away your confidence, for in due time you shall reap, if you faint not, the fruition of the desired condition is not yet gained; Seeke it therefore still, pursue it still, though two harvests be past, two summers ended, ere the third come, we may be saved.

*This is the first point.*



## C H A P. VI.

## The second point.

**E** come to the view of the words in their second capacitie, as they are a complaint for advantages past, and lost; and in this acception they carry this sense.

1. Taking summer, and harvest, for times of advantage; The plea of the Church of the Jews, whether to God, or to her own Governours, runs thus. You have excused the delay of our help from severall lets, and transfer the reason thereof upon the want of opportunitie. When we cry out of Scarcitie, because there is no bread in the Citie, you incourage us with the approach of harvest; It is true, there is yet no food, but if harvest were come, you should all be fed: and when we expresse our feares, and doubts, that friends faile, and we shall not be releaved, you lay the blame upon the unseasonablenesse of the yeare, the foulness of the way, and the like. But if the spring of action were here, and the summer had once made the wayes passable, your delivery would not be farre, all cause of complaint would be taken away. Surely, replies the Church; I doubt these are but vaine words, and therefore miserable comforts; for *The Harvest is past, and the Summer ended, and we are not saved.*

2. Taking Harvest, and Summer for times of impediments, (all comes to one end) When we cry, and call for help, and tell you, that our eyes even faile with looking for our delivery, and yet we see no sign, refuge failes, none regards our sorrow, or our distresse, you advise us to be content, to waite a while, and we shall yet have cause to praise him, who is our deliverer, and our God; for Harvest is a busie time, men cannot be spared for the warres, Summer is a season, wherein all provide for them-

themselves, which being past, salvation and helpe will be at your doores. Were this true, it were something, but we see and feele the contrary; for, *The Harvest is past, and the Summer ended, and we are not saved.*

Take the words either way, that which we hence collect, and to you propound, is this.

Times of advantage for a Lands delivery, slipped by *Doctrine 2.* the instruments of a Lands delivery, are just Grounds of complaint, and lamentation.

The point is seasonable, concernes many, I would therefore presse it in three Observations.

Se<sup>c</sup>t. 1. *The care to have advantages.*

○ Observe first the great care, and vigilancy, that is used in the managing of all affaires, to get, and to improve advantages for their own benefit, both by the good, and bad continually. 2.

Good men out of their publike spirit, and love to the people, or out of their wisdom for salvation, and love to their owne soules, according as the occasions were, have done their best. 2.

1. To get a faire advantage, that might best help forward their end. The ruine of Jerusalem, and the burning of the Citie was brought to *Nehemiab* in the moneth Chisleu, which was the ninth moneth, *Neh. 1. 1.* and suddenly his heart was affected, and he resolved upon doing something for the House of God, and cause of his people; yet he sate still three moneths after, before he so much as petitioned for libertie to goe, till Nisan the first moneth, *Chap. 2. 1.* Because the moneth Nisan was his moneth of waiting, and so gave him many a faire opportunitie, to speake with the King.

2. To improve an advantage gotten: So the woman of Samaria casually comming into Christs company, and at last perceiving what he was, gladly layes hold on the *Joh. 4.* offer.

offer; Sir (saith she) I perceive you are a Prophet, I have a doubt in conscience hath long troubled me, you I am sure can resolve me, it is about the place of Gods worship; our fathers say, we ought to worship in this mountaine, you say at Jerusalem, I am in doubt between two, What thinke you? Thus she improved an opportunitie. So  *Davids* men,  *1 Sam. 24. 5.*  with what gladnesse did they apprehend and receive an advantage over  *Saul* ? Behold the day: and with what eagernesse did they advise  *David*  to lay hold thereon, enforcing their persuasion from God, and his promise? thus they would not lose an opportunitie.

2.

Bad, and wicked men have not been lesse wise in their generation this way, then the children of light.

1. To get such:  *Haman*  having no other wayes of observing advantagious times, cast lots a whole yeere together to finde the fittest.

2. To improve them, though to their own shame: as  *Iosephs*  Mistris,  *Gen. 39. 11.*  finding  *Ioseph*  alone about his affaires, she tooke hold of the opportunitie; Her husband was not at home; The servants were all abroad;  *Ioseph*  was alone; Here was a time for a wicked wit, and a wide conscience to shew themselves for a raging lust, and an impudent face to lay hold on. And the reason of all is, because want of advantagious opportunities may hinder the acting of any desigine, stop the performance of any purpose. The  *Philippians*  had free hearts, and ready minds to be helpfull to  *Pauls*  necessities, which he acknowledgeth with joy, though probably they did nothing, for they wanted opportunitie,  *Phil. 4. 10.*  Woe, saith the Prophet, to those that devise mischief, and worke evil on their beds? Why, they act nothing. True, but in the morning light they doe; When it is in their power of their hands, the darknesse of the night hinders, but with the first opportunitie they act, what be-

fore they plotted; every thing in his time, the night for devising, the day for executing; *Judas* upon the receipt of money did not presently betray his Master, but from that day he sought opportunitie to doe it.

## Sect. 2.

*The judgement of the Scripture.*

○ Bserve secondly, What a stampe and Character of honour, and disgrace the holy Ghost puts upon such as use, or not use opportunities offered.

2.

First, of respect, and honour both on persons, and things.

First, on persons, that have been wise to use such opportunities. The sonnes of *Issachar* stand renowned with this Eulogy, They skilfully knew the times, what *Israel* ought to doe, *1 Chron* 12. 32. *Ahashuerosh* his Counsellors are called wise men, because they knew the times, *Esther* 1. 13. Well may he have the reputation of a valiant man, but not the esteeme of a wise Governour, that knowes not how to get, and how to improve advantages to the best: A wise heart knowes both time, and judgement; that is, is judicious to know the times, for to every purpose there is a time, and judgement; that is, a fit time, and seasonable, to the discovery & improving of which, judgement and wisdom is required; and for the want of which, the evill of man is great upon him, *Eccles*. 8. 5, 6. Miseries may continue bitter, and sharpe upon a people, because the instruments of its good are not judicious to know, and make use of the times thereof.

Secondly, to things, or actions done in their season, they are ripe fruit, and seasonable, brought forth in due time; If the children of *Israel* would offer a sacrifice acceptable, that should be a sweet favour of rest to God, they must offer it in his due season, *Numb*. 28. 2. to wit, the burnt offering of the Sabbath, in his Sabbath, *v*. 10.

פרי בעתו

במקומו

and the burnt offering of the moneth, in his moneth, v. 14. for every thing is beautifull in his time.

Secondly, of disrespect, and scorne on the contrary, where this wisdom, and judgement wants.

First, for the persons, folly is with them; put an advantage in the hand of him, that hath not a heart wisely to use it; and it is but a price in the hand of a foole, *Prov. 17. 16.*

Secondly, for things done out of their time, they are but as *Ieroboams* feasts, the fictions of his owne heart, *1 King. 12. 31.* These are not seasons found out, but made, & therefore the author seldome prospers in them.

Sect. 3. *The Consequent of the losse.*

3. **O**BSERVE, what ill consequent followes upon the losse of such advantages; *Ahab* can tell you to his cost, *Because thou hast let goe out of thy hand, a man whom I appointed to die, thy life shall goe for his life, and thy people for his people, 1 King. 20. 42.* Advantages lost on the one side are usually gathered up by the other, and possibly thereby a sword may be put into the hand of our adversary to our owne ruine. And no lesse losse attends upon actions done disadvantageously: The Indulgences of *Leo* were not so bad, as some former, yet had a worse effect then any: and my Author gives the reason; occasions arise many times able to produce notable effects, yet come to nothing for want of fit agents: yea, it is necessary for the effecting of any thing, that the time come, in which it may please God to correct the errors of men: even good things out of time lose of their goodnesse; unseasonable comforts are no comforts, but aggravations of sorrow. This way looks that lamentation of the disconsolate mother, *Lam. 2. 12.* when her children fainted in the streets of the Citie: They said, that is, it was said by bystanders, some told their mothers, where corn and Wine

was, where they might get food for their little ones, when they fainted in the corners of the street, and poured out their soul into their mothers bosome; they came too late, when the childe was past eating, then they brought newes of bread, for so I take the words, and not as usually, they said, that is, the children said and cryed for bread; for how could they cry when they fainted, or aske for victuals, when they were dying? this complaint is not set forth by the childrens crying, but by the overlate and unseasonable tydings of refreshment; the opportunitie was past, and therefore the childe not saved.

## CHAP. VII.

*The Vses.*

**I**Lies not within my spheare, to recapitulate either times, or men, that have beene, that have slipped advantages for our good: Neither would you deeme it very seasonable, to light my candle in the Sun-shine; that is the work of an Historian, not Divine: If any that have been advanced to be Agents for the Lands delivery, have either neglected advantages offered, or have made the great worke of these times disadvantageous, or difficult through their folly, feare, or falshood; let such know, they have consuted shame to their owne selves, and houses; neither doe they incur the one halfe of that ignominie for the present, wherewith posteritie shall brand them in story. And they may be abashed at the same conceit, that once troubled the vitious Emperour *Tiberius*, saying, That he did already \* smartingly feele the disgracefull reproches, that posterity would cast upon him. For can the children speake well of such, that have stained their name, and made disgracefull the very issuing from such a stocke? but my businesse is conscience, not credit.

\* *Sentire posteritatis graves contumelias.*

credit, and in this place I can onely sigh out, what we all feele: *The Harvest is past, the Summer is ended, and we are not saved.*

Let me therefore runne to a close in two words, the one spoken to those, who are the Instruments of a Lands delivery; the other to all, my selfe, and others.

SECT. I. *To the Instruments.*

TO those (if any such be present, and such there be) who are in publique employment, to whose hands the publique safetie is, or may be trusted; whether by countell, or action, by advise, or armes to advance the securitie, to prevent the disturbance of our Land, and Church: Give, I say, I pray, give no occasion to such a complaint; let none for your sakes say, the Harvest is past, and we are not victualed; the Summer is ended, and our peace is not settled. You are called, and raised to be the *Noahs* of our age, the *Naamans* of our Kingdome; be you therefore respectively answerable to both.

First, to *Noah*; Helpe the Lord, and comfort his people: Comfort them, First, in their endeavours; you know, what their hand is upon, advance it all you can; downe with those stops and hinderers of our motion to puritie, and peace: up with all things that may helpe it on: If an Army will doe it, let an Army goe on; if an Ordinance will doe it, let an Ordinance passe; if a Covenant be the meane, let that be entered into; if an Oath, let that be sworne. Throw away the rubs, out with the Lords enemies, and the Lands; vex the *Midianites*; abolish the *Amalekites*, else they will vex you with their Wiles, as they have done heretofore. Let Popery finde no favour, because it is treasonable; Prelacy as little, because it is tyrannicall: but establish God, his Truth, and waies.

Secondly, against their pressures, you know what hand is upon them, or hath been; ease them, that they may

take their advantages; and here let us note:

First, one of the greatest disadvantages, that ever God and his cause met with in this, or any Kingdomes; it is that wing of abomination making desolate, spoken of by *Daniel*; the wicked spirituall Courts under the Prelates, and their Officers: Composed of the basest of men; meddling with the basest of things; aiming at the basest of ends: A man here was famous, according as he was more able, or active to lift up an axe against the servants of God in the Land; for our Ministers, such I meane, as are men of parts and piety, this Court hath driven away some, silenced others, disturbed all: Say the same of others: This upheld an ignorant, and idle Clergie, a Popish and superstitious people: the Agents herein are they, that lived of the finnes of the people, and made themselves merry with the abominations of the time; vitious in their lives, extravagant in their lusts, injurious in their places, luxurious till their deaths. These lost us our advantages, disturbed our Kingdome, made a breach in our peace, set two Kingdomes together by the eares, and that for the worst of causes; a Tippet scuffle, or a Surplice brabble, as one well cald it: These sons of *Zer-viah* have beene too hard for us heretofore; but thou art a wise and great Assembly, thou shalt not suffer them therefore to continue; but utterly thou shalt abolish this *Amalek* from under heaven.

Secondly, one of the greatest wonders of providence, that I have met with almost in any story; not so much in the ruine of this Antichristian crew and Corporation of Impostors; this wicked, and most cruell government of the Prelacy, for downe they must; for in this our hopeful reformation, and expectation of a comfortable condition, that of *Isaiah* must be accomplished upon the whole frame of this bloody, and proud building, which at the end of his Prophecie, he spake of *Edom*, and *Egypt*: when



the whole Land rejoyces, they must be desolate and mourne for their violence against their brethren, the sonnes, and seed of the blessed of the Lord. Under them the poore could have no rest, such advantages, Harvests and Summers have they beene to the Papists, such shelters to the prophane, idle, and persecuting Ministry of the Land, that it proclaimes them not to have beene of Gods planting; and every plant, that our heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be plucked up. For no doubt it cannot be a calling approved of God, the ordinary bitter and accursed fruits whereof were the many drops of blood drawn from many of Gods people, which now no doubt, doe call for vengeance upon that generation, as one of their owne speakes of another, and better businessse \*. Not so much in this their ruine, doth this worke of wisdom shine, as in the manner of it; for as God is known by all the judgements that he executeth, so chiefly when the wicked is snared in the worke of his owne hands: In this present case, how their table is become their snare, and that which they projected for their welfare, is become their trap; is seene on all sides, by all eyes: A whole volume might be filled with particulars of Gods providentiall acts this way lately. How they have striven to uphold their tottering Tyranny we know; their last, and greatest refuge was by an Oath to oblige all to make their standing immovable: Wherein being opposed, ever since that time they have beene settling; but neither Remonstrances, Petitions, Votes, Bills, or any thing could wholly effect their abolition; and we are now come to their maine hopes, even associating all the Kingdomes by an Oath to their extirpation: By an Oath, they had hoped, their houses should have continued for ever: And by an Oath, we hope, their place shall be no more found: Thus God measures out unto them their designs in a proportion into their owne

\* *Belharq. of the Scotch Covenant.*

owne bofome. Thefe are our Lands difadvantages, that have loft it both the Harvefts, and Summers of opportunities: Let thofe of you, into whofe hands the fword of Courage, and Action is put; eafe it, and in it, us all; Oh that you could helpe us. Doe your beft, lofe not the feafon; give no occafion for this Complaint to any.

To incourage you, remember, you have the example of God himfelf, commiferating, commanding, delivering, detefting; He fees the troubles of his people, and his bowels are moved at it. I have feen, I have feen the evils my people fuffer in Egypt, and in their affliction I am afflicted. He beholds the warfare of his Church, and commands, that it be fweetned. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, faith your God, fpeake comfortably to Jerufalem, *Ifa.* 58. 1. He obferves their own weakneffe to help themfelves, and his own arme brings deliverance unto them. I removed his foulder from the yoke, and his hands from the fiery furnace, *Pfal.* 81. 6. He marks the mercilefneffe of their task-mafters, and his foul loathes them; I am wonderfully difpleafed with the Heathen that are at eafe, for I was but a little angry, and they helped forward the affliction, *Zech.* 1. 15. Having fuch an example before our eyes, Go you, and doe likewise; That in this day of, *Jacobs* troubles he may be faved out of it; Let it never be faid, that God put the men of our mifery into your hands, and you let them goe; Let neither paffed deferts, nor prefent dependancy, take from us thofe whom God hath defigned, and their own demerits have brought to deferved censure.

To intimate a caution. Two things caufe this complaint, and give the occafion to this out-cry, they lofe Harvefts and Summers, and minde not their maine worke, our deliverance.

First, Sluggifhneffe. The people that know the Lord will do exploits, faith *Daniel*, will be alwayes doing, and

בעל משחית

endeavouring, they will watch for opportunities, and lay hold on them; The bird that is alwayes hopping from bough to bough, is safe from the Gunners eye; an active spirit hath a right to a blessing; Cursed is he that doth the worke of the Lord negligently; The enemy destroyes a kingdome by doing, and a friend by not doing. He that is dull, and sloathfull in his worke, is brother to him, that is a master of mischief, as the Hebrew hath it, *Prov.* 18.9. for the one, as well as the other, consumes his own meanes, Men, Countrey, Flesh, *Eccles.* 4.5. To stretch themselves on their beds, is made one of the captivating sins of a Land, *Amos* 6.4. David remaining idle at home was insnared with vanitie. He rose from his bed, saith the text, *2 Sam.* 11.2. And when *Ishboseth* was unhappily slaine by two vile varlets, the holy Ghost notes it in him, as an unseasonable act; *Ishboseth* lay on his bed at noone. All our talents are committed to us for employment, which if we neglect, it is no marvell, though Harvests passe, and Summers end, and we not saved.

Secondly, Faithlesnesse; I confesse, this is your Crosse, so many instruments proving faultie this way. That judgement failed in the choice, I cannot say; that expectation did in the issue, I can: Had a faithfull heart in the breast been answerable to a promising face in the shew, in all by you employed, neither had some Towns been, as now, governed; nor some counties been, as now, spoiled; nor some battels been, as then, incomplete: Nay, nor perhaps, this remaining disturbance been, as this day, unfinished; but it is not so, and it is not so, because there were some that deale wickedly with the Covenant, and these were, and will be corrupted with flatteries. Well, If these cause complaint, let then action, and firmnesse, adde such life to our endeavours, such courage to our followers, that ere another Harvest be

past, another Summer ended, we may be saved. This to the instruments.

Sect. 2. To all.

If opportunities slipped be matters of griefe, set your hand to the worke, whilest it is day; The night cometh, when no man can work. You look up to God, and you do well; you wrestle with heaven in prayers, and teares, and that is commendable; yet know God blesteth us in all we put our hand to.

Take heed therefore.

1. Neither let prayers make us slack our endeavours.
2. Nor endeavours make us cold in prayers.
3. But let both go together.

1 Not the first; Ordinarily, our endeavours are a conducing help to our ends; It shall be well with the righteous, for the fruit of their hands shall be given them. There is a double fruit mentioned by this Prophet, the fruit of the lips, the fruit of our hands; That brings peace, this brings good, both advance the work. It was worthily said of *Philo* in a day of trouble; It becomes us, whom the Emperor hateth, to be courageous: for it then is fit for God to help, when all humane succours faile.

*Isa. 3.*

*Nauch.*

2. Not the second. Always Gods blessing is an ingredient to successe; He that onely observes the wind and clouds, and lookes no higher, shall neither sow, nor reape; for the blessing of the Almighty maketh rich. Let us stand upon our watch, lest even the praying people be here insnared; Observable is that complaint of the Church, *Cant. 5. 7.* The keepers of the wals tooke away my veile; my prevalency, as the word may intend: when I perceived the wals of the Citie fortified, man'd, kept, I grew secure, I laid aside my veile, my praying defence, as needlesse.

וַיִּבְרָךְ יְהוָה  
 וַיִּבְרָךְ יְהוָה  
 Iuda, yet rules with  
 God.  
*Hof. 13. 13.*

3. For indeed both must go along, but each in their order. The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon, was the watchword once of the Lords army; And *Dauids* prayer teacheth as much, *Psal. 67. 1.* God be mercifull unto, and blesse us, ( here is his prayer ) and cause thy face to shine \* with us, so the Originall, that is, we endeavouring, labouring, and surely comfortable is the fruition of that condition, how long soever pursued, which is both the fruit of our lips, and hands. Let all then willingly offer themselves to the worke of the Lord, and let the hearts of all be towards all them, that willingly offer themselves thereto. This is the day which the Lord hath made: Now is the acceptable yeare. Seeke the Lord, while he may be found, call upon him, while he is neere. If the bridegroom be entered, the doores will be locked, and then it is too late. That the worke may be done, let us watch for advantages, and take the opportunity, that so glory may dwell in our Land: Which if once effected, what may a man then answer the messenger of the nations? *Isa. 14. the last vers.* If a stranger aske, what newes in England? what shall be our return, what shall we say? What? why, the best news that ever was, God hath established Sion, and the poore of his people are confident in her; Oh, here is a change of late, religion is here settled in purity, and peace; here is a ground work laid to erect the Kingdom of Jesus Christ upon, that the gates of hell shall never prevail against it; God hath established Sion, and as for his people, there is a new world with them. In times past there was nothing seen or heard, but troubling, and persecuting, citing, and censuring, fearing, and flying, binding, and branding, but now it is become a roome for Gods outcasts, a shelter for his poore despised ones; Thus then shall you say to any messenger, or traveller, that is desirous to know, how it fares with the Lords people among us; God hath established

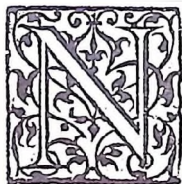
אמת \*  
not אלינה

established Sion, and the poore of his people are sheltred there. And (beleeeve me) such expressions were a farre more joyfull sound, then any complaint, or mournfull report that the mirth of the Land were gone, Such a one, as was this sight of Israel here in this Scripture:

*The Harvest is past, the Summer is gone,  
and we are not saved.*

ה ל ל ו י ה

A Thanksgiving unto God taken out of the Forme of Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments used in the Church of *Scotland*, after their Deliverance from the tyranny of the *Frenchmen*, by the *English*: with prayers made for the continuation of Peace between the Realmes of *England* and *Scotland*. Printed at *Edinburgh* by *Thomas Bassandine*, Anno Domini 1575.



Now, Lord, seeing that we enioy comfort both in body and spirit by reason of this quietnesse of thy mercy granted unto us, after our most desperate troubles, in the Which We appeared utterly to have been overwhelmed; We praise and glorifie thy mercy and goodnesse, whu pitiously looked upon us When we in our selves were utterly confounded. But seeing, O Lord, that to receive benefits at thy hands, and not to be thankfull for the same, is nothing else but a scale against us in the day of Iudgement; we most humbly beseech thee to grant unto us hearts so mindfull of the calamities past, that we continually may feare to provoke thy iustice to punish us with the like or worse plagues. And seeing that when we by our own power were altogether unable to have freed our selves from the tyranny of strangers, and from the bondage and thraldome

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thralldome pretended against us, thou of thine especial goodnesse dost  
move the hearts of our neighbours ( of whom we had deserved no such  
favour ) to take upon them the common burthen with us, and for our  
deliverance, not only to spend the lives of many, but also to hazard the  
estate and tranquillitie of their Realme and Common-wealth. Grant  
unto us, O Lord, that with such reverence we may remember thy bene-  
fits received, that after this, in our default, we never enter into hostili-  
tie against the Realme and Nation of England. Suffer us never, O  
Lord, to fall to that ingratitude and detestable unthankfulnessso, that  
we shall seeke the destruction and death of those whom thou hast made  
instruments to deliver us from the tyranny of mercilesse strangers.  
Dissipate thou the counsels of such as deceitfully travell to stirre the  
hearts of the Inhabitants of either Realme against the other. Let their  
malicious practices be their own confusion, and grant thou of thy mercy  
that love, concord, and tranquillitie may continue and encrease amongst  
the Inhabitants of this Ile, even to the coming of the Lord Iesus  
Christ, by whose glorious Evangel thou of thy mercy dost call us both  
to unitie, peace, and Christian concord. The full perfection whereof we  
shall possesse in the fulnesse of thy Kingdome, when all offences shall be  
removed, iniquitie shall be suppressed, and thy chosen children be fully  
endued with that perfect glory, in the which now our Lord Iesus reign-  
eth To whom with thee, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, praise, and  
glory, now and ever. So be it.

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